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International Boundary Digest: Latin America

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A Research Paper

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International Boundary Digest: Latin America

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A Research Paper

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International Boundary Digest: Latin America

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Preface

*Information available
as of 31 March 1986
was used in this report.*

This Digest on Latin America is the second in a series of regional digests that the Office of Global Issues plans to produce on international boundaries that either are in dispute or suggest by their characteristics potential for disagreement. The boundary information is categorized for ease of use, particularly by the current intelligence officer, when fast-breaking border incidents occur and charges and countercharges relating to border issues are made:

- *Border Basics*. Description of the border's length, status of demarcation, and its physical and cultural characteristics.
- *Significant Developments*. Summary of related issues as they affect political relationships.
- *Frontier History*. Review of the history of the frontier and the diplomatic evolution of the boundary.
- *Current Developments and Outlook*. Assessment of current border issues and prospects for their resolution.

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Other border factors—economic value or potential, ethnic mix, population pressures—are also noted as they pertain to border issues. A chronology of important dates affecting boundary status is included, and key boundary references are cited. A map, or maps, accompanies each boundary discussed to highlight the disputed sectors and territory and to illustrate other factors and relationships.

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Maritime boundary disputes involving nearby islands or coastal features related to boundary controversies also are included in the Digest. This publication, however, omits the more than 300 continental shelf and other maritime boundaries, many yet to be delimited, between the world's 139 coastal states and discussion of other types of maritime boundary and jurisdictional conflicts.

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The US Government rarely takes an official position on the validity of a particular claim in a boundary dispute. Boundary representation on maps produced by the US Government is complicated by map scale and the amount of detail shown. Four categories of boundaries are normally depicted on US Government maps: international boundary, indefinite

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boundary, boundary in dispute, and other lines of separation. Maps of disputed areas carry the disclaimer "Boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative."

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Background

Disputes over international boundaries are a common cause of international tension and conflict. Almost half of the world's nations share land boundaries that are disputed. Additionally, disputes are sometimes revived over boundaries long settled, particularly where regional political alignments are fluid and internal political conditions change rapidly. Boundary issues are a major foreign policy concern of the United States. Disputes between nations friendly to the United States present sticky diplomatic dilemmas in that each party to the dispute will at some point exert pressure on Washington to support its view of the issue.

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Fixed, geographically precise international boundaries are a recent development in international relations. Although ancient political entities—nomadic groups, tribes, and kingdoms—recognized geographical limits to their authority and control, these limits were usually vague and shifting, and located in distant and lightly populated frontier zones. Ancient borders often followed easily recognized physical features such as mountain ranges, deserts, and swamps; sometimes rivers served to separate different ethnic groups. Some states, however, built walls or constructed other physical barriers to define limits of control, regulate trade, and control the movement of people and the establishment of settlements.

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Modern international boundaries marked with pillars, cleared strips, and other physical means of identification accompanied the evolution of the nation-state system in Europe that commenced in the late 17th century. Advances in mathematics, geodesy, surveying techniques, and cartography permitted states to compile reliable maps of their territory and to more accurately draw their boundaries. New nations were born, colonies were established, and older nations that relied on distant buffer zones for their borders gradually were forced, or chose to define, their boundaries with greater precision. Increasing population pressures and the need for more land led to the settlement of frontier lands and the necessity to establish definite state limits.

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Boundary disputes originate from a variety of causes and for different reasons. The degree of national passion and emotion aroused over a boundary-territorial dispute is often wildly disproportionate to the size and value of the area disputed. Occasionally, international boundaries, long settled by treaty and demarcated, are used as a pretext—citing alleged violations or “incidents”—to publicize deep-seated quarrels between states and to inflame public opinion.

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Types of Boundary Disputes

The list of causes for border disputes is lengthy, but in general there are three major situations that lead to disagreement:

- Disputes arising from the boundary marking itself, usually in the interpretation of details and the lack of precise geographic data.
- Disputes as the consequence of territorial and economic expansionism.
- Boundary problems created from state succession and the desire to renegotiate old boundary treaties.

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In all boundary disputes the political-military strength of the state and domestic politics have as much or more to do with the raising (or perhaps reviving) of boundary-territorial questions than the legality and justification for boundary adjustment. Once a dispute is aired and a nation presents its case publicly, all types of evidence—good, bad, and irrelevant—are used to convince other states of the justice of the particular nation's claim. Occasionally disputes will be settled without rancor, but more often they sputter along for years, even decades. Still others may go to a third country or an international tribunal for arbitration and settlement, and at times armed conflict helps settle the issue.

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For example, the Argentina-Chile boundary originally was delimited on the assumption that the line of high peaks also coincided with the watershed. Later exploration revealed that the watershed was well east of the line of highest peaks. Controversy over this and a later dispute over which stream was the headwater stream that affected the boundary had to be resolved through British arbitration.

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Colonial boundaries defined by the European powers in the Americas, Africa, and much of Asia from the 16th through the 19th centuries were often hastily drawn and without benefit of detailed knowledge of the

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terrain. This lack of precision frequently led to later disputes over the boundary when the compilation of more accurate maps revealed the errors. In some cases, colonial boundaries were drawn so as to keep intact homogeneous ethnic and economic areas, but this was more an exception than a rule.

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The creation of new states, particularly in ex-colonial territories, frequently is a cause of border problems. New states often attempt to redress old grievances and improve their internal political standing through threats or acts of belligerence against neighboring states. This may lead to the revival of ancient claims and the demand to renegotiate old boundary treaties.

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Boundary Terms

Terms used in boundary disputes and boundary making possess special meanings that are often ignored or misapplied in press reports and in the speeches of national leaders when referring to border problems. Some of the more common terms and definitions are:

- *Boundary*. A line that marks the limits within which the state exercises its sovereign rights.
- *Border*. Border is often used as a synonym for boundary, but the term has a more generalized meaning of area or territory close to or in proximity to the actual line of separation on the ground between the states. The terms border zone and borderlands suggest the areal elasticity of the word. See *frontier*.
- *Delimitation*. The determination of where a boundary should be drawn through use of verbal description, usually in a treaty or similar diplomatic proceedings. The verbal description varies as to detail but contains sufficient references to physical features—midline of a river, a watershed, a mountain crest—and to specific points identified by geographical coordinates to permit a joint team of surveyors and technicians to demarcate the boundary on the ground. A map showing the agreed delimitation line usually is appended to the agreement.

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- *Demarcation.* The act of marking a boundary on the ground, as defined in the treaty or other document, by means of pillars, monuments, or other types of markers. Demarcation teams provided for in the treaty usually make or update ground surveys of the local topography. The end product is a more detailed point-to-point description of the boundary (markers are numbered or lettered consecutively) that is combined with one or more large-scale maps showing the exact alignment and individual markers. To be binding, the proceedings, resulting from the team's work and issued as a protocol or annex to the original treaty, must be signed and ratified by each nation.
- *Frontier.* A zone or area, usually of considerable length and breadth, that indicates the approximate limits of political authority. No exact limit is set to a frontier until a boundary agreement is reached and the boundary is demarcated on the ground. The term frontier to denote a nation's outward territories is not a synonym for the term boundary.
- *Thalweg.* The middle of a river channel, or its principal channel when more than one exists, of navigable streams that form an international boundary. Recent international law holds that the thalweg is the boundary in navigable rivers, failing any special agreement to the contrary. A thalweg boundary may divide the river into two very unequal parts; the thalweg also may change because of flooding and other natural causes. Nations usually have an agreement to resolve boundary questions when rivers shift their courses. In nonnavigable streams, international boundaries are usually defined by median lines. Detailed maps delineating the riverine boundaries are a standard part of the boundary documentation.
- *Territorial sea.* A belt of sea and underlying seabed and subsoil adjacent to the coast where the coastal state is sovereign. This sovereignty extends to the airspace over the territorial sea. Under international law, the maximum breadth of the territorial sea is 12 nautical miles (the US claims a 3-nautical-mile breadth) from the baseline. In the territorial sea, ships of all states enjoy the right of innocent passage, and, in international straits, ships and aircraft have the right of nonsuspendable transit passage.

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- *Continental shelf.* As defined by the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, a nation's continental shelf comprises the seabed and subsoil seaward of the territorial sea extending to the outer edge of the continental margin, or to a distance of 200 nautical miles from the baseline, whichever is greater. 

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International Boundary Digest:
Latin America

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Introduction

Boundary and territorial disputes have been a major cause of conflict in Latin America. Most states have at times disagreed with their neighbors over the location of common borders. Although many disputes have been low-key and have remained dormant, others have flared into armed clashes, occasionally leading or contributing to the outbreak of war.

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Many disagreements arose from the way in which Latin American boundaries evolved. Early Spanish and Portuguese territorial grants often consisted of simple, straight-line tracts extending from points along the coast to vaguely described limits in the interior. From these ill-defined tracts and from ambiguously worded descriptions of rivers and other natural features, the boundaries of colonial territories were drawn. Attempts to fix boundaries accurately were severely handicapped by a lack of geographical knowledge and detailed maps, particularly for areas in the interior. These imperfect boundaries were perpetuated in postcolonial times by the doctrine of *uti possidetis* (retaining possession), proclaimed at the Congress of Lima in 1848, whereby independent states retained their colonial borders. Competing claims to newly discovered or potential economic resources in disputed areas complicated matters in later times. More recently, disputes have arisen over the division of maritime areas.

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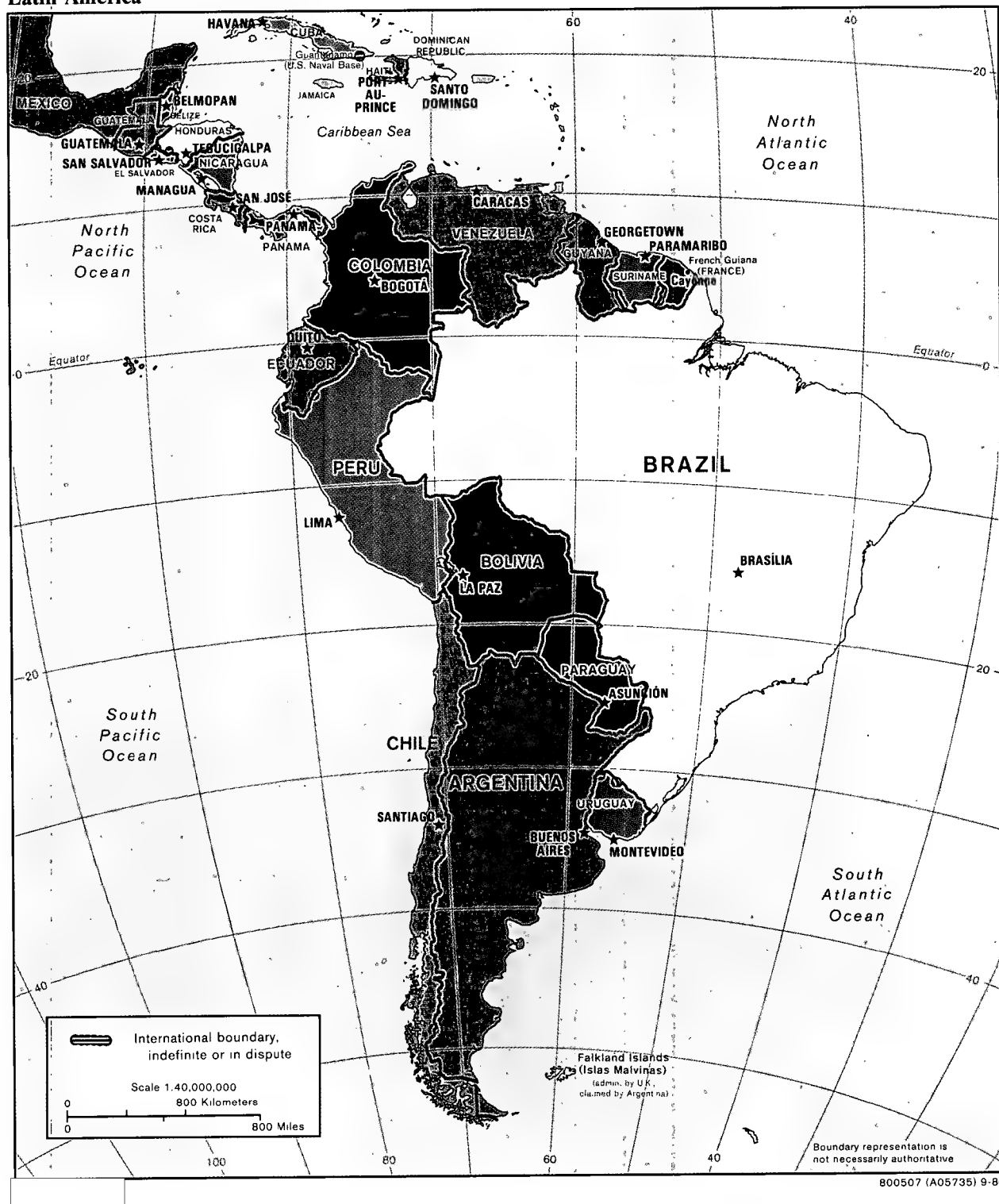
Latin American territorial disagreements have strong nationalistic overtones, reinforced by the long and bitter history of most disputes. Nationalist constraints still limit political initiatives and inhibit compromise in negotiations.

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Argentina-Chile

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Beagle Channel



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Argentina-Chile (Beagle Channel)**Border Basics**

The Beagle Channel is a 200-kilometer-long by 1- to 5-kilometer-wide passage between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans separating Isla Grande, the principal and largest island of Tierra del Fuego, from a number of smaller islands that terminate at Cape Horn some 125 kilometers to the south. The eastern end of the channel is marked by a cape (Cabo San Pio), south and southwest of which lie the three small islands of Nueva, Lennox, and Picton whose ownership was disputed for a century. []

The islands are small (total area of about 350 square kilometers), rocky and steep-sided (peak elevations ranging from 200 to 300 meters), and covered with varying amounts of scrub, grasses, and forests, depending on exposure to the winds. The area is noted for its stormy, almost constantly changing weather and, in particular, for strong winds that are estimated to be of moderate gale force (about 30 knots or more) nearly a third of the time. Numerous streams descend to the sea and along them at earlier times were placer sites where gold was panned. With the possible exception of nitrate deposits, the islands have no resources of significance. Only a dozen or so Chilean inhabitants, both permanent and temporary, live on the islands. []

Significant Developments

In October 1984 Vatican officials produced, after several years of work, an Argentine-Chilean treaty that resolved the long dispute over the Beagle Channel and related issues. The treaty contained sufficient advantages to permit each side to accept its terms without stirring up discontent. There was strong popular support for the treaty in Argentina, expressed in a popular referendum, and in May 1985 the formal ratification ceremony held at the Vatican ended the century-old dispute. []

Frontier History

The European discovery of the Beagle Channel did not occur until 1830, long after the initial explorations of the southern coasts of South America. Named after

the British survey ship whose crew discovered the east-west channel connection between the two oceans, the channel and the general Tierra del Fuego area were initially of little interest to either Chile or Argentina because of the bleak physical conditions and the presence of hostile Indians. In 1849 Chile founded the port of Punta Arenas on the Strait of Magellan, north of the Beagle Channel, which led to an Argentine protest. Discussions produced no immediate agreement, but in 1855 a friendship treaty between the two nations was signed that charged them to observe the boundaries existing in 1810 prior to gaining their independence from Spain. This clause was meaningless since the 1810 boundaries were vaguely described and not precisely defined cartographically. []

In the early 1870s the discovery of guano and coal deposits renewed interest and raised tensions. After becoming embroiled in a war with Peru, Chile sought an agreement with Argentina over the border issue. An accord was signed in 1881 that provided for a division of Isla Grande along the meridian of 68°40'W, as far south as the Beagle Channel. According to the treaty terms, the islands located to the south of the Beagle Channel were to belong to Chile and those to the east in the Atlantic to Argentina. In an 1893 supplement to the treaty, it was stipulated that Argentina would claim no territory on the Pacific side and Chile none on the Atlantic side, using the meridian passing through Cape Horn as a reference guide. In 1902 another treaty was signed designating the British Crown as arbiter in future border disputes between the two countries. (At the time, sections of the Argentina-Chile boundary farther north in the Andes were in dispute.) []

In 1915 Argentina formally protested Chilean possession of the three islands of Lennox, Nueva, and Picton and their surrounding islets located at the eastern end of the Beagle Channel. Argentina objected on the grounds that the islands were east of the Channel, hence in the Atlantic and under Argentina's jurisdiction. Chile responded by citing original survey descriptions that had established Cabo San Pio, located about 40 kilometers east of the Argentine version of

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the start of the channel, as the "entrance" and consequently placing the islands south of the channel and belonging to Chile. []

The dispute remained low-key for many years, although periodic attempts (1915, 1938, and 1955) at arbitration were thwarted by a failure to ratify such agreements. Starting in the 1960s, the Beagle Channel and the surrounding seas received greater attention because of the growing interest in oceanic resources and the evolution of international law that made ownership of islands valuable as base points from which to construct limits of maritime jurisdiction. Both countries moved to develop bases: Argentina upgraded Ushuaia on the north side of the Channel from an outpost to a sizable town with an airfield, naval base, and port, including storage areas; and, on a much smaller scale, Chile improved Puerto Williams on the south side of the Beagle Channel. []

Tensions increased, and in 1971 Britain, according to the terms of the 1902 agreement, was asked to arbitrate. After consultations, London's proposal to refer the case to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) was accepted. In 1977 the five judges that made up the arbitration panel handed down a decision. It was quickly ratified by Great Britain and passed to the two governments. The award confirmed Chile's ownership of the disputed islands, set the boundary in the Beagle Channel in the middle, and held that Chile's title to the islands gave it jurisdiction over the "appurtenant waters and continental shelf and adjacent submarine areas. . . ." The last point was a bitter blow to Argentina's position that Chile was a "Pacific" power and Argentina an "Atlantic" power and to Argentina's use of the 1893 treaty supplement to the 1881 accord as the basis for its case. Chile quickly announced it would "observe the conditions" of the award, but Argentina stated it would need time to review the decision. In January 1978 Argentina declared null and void Britain's acceptance of the ICJ award and prepared to go to war to gain possession of the disputed islands. []

After considerable tension and narrowly averting a war, the two countries agreed in December 1978 to accept the Vatican's offer to mediate. The meditation efforts involved lengthy discussions and presentation

of evidence, and it was not until October 1984 that Vatican officials announced a settlement in the form of a lengthy "peace and friendship" treaty. The treaty was based on numerous compromises. Chile's sovereignty over the disputed islands was upheld, but its claims to maritime areas that overlapped those of Argentina were drastically reduced. In delineating a maritime boundary dividing the seas where each country would have exclusive economic rights, the treaty drafters substituted the term "Southern Zone Sea" for "Atlantic" thus finessing the "two-ocean" issue. In Argentina, a national referendum was held that overwhelmingly approved the treaty, although the Argentine Senate gave only narrow approval in agreeing to ratify the accord. Chile also agreed to the treaty, although there was some public grumbling over the compromises made, particularly to the reduced maritime areas left the Chileans. []

Current Developments and Outlook

The formal exchange of the instruments of ratification (May 1985) appears to have ended the long and bitter Beagle Channel dispute. Switzerland's acceptance of the role of arbiter and the forming (July 1985) of a binational commission to facilitate and improve economic cooperation are favorable signs for future peaceful relations. []

Border Treaties and Key Dates

1830

Beagle Channel is discovered by British survey ships.

1849

Chile establishes Punta Arenas on Strait of Magellan; Argentina protests.

1855

Argentine-Chilean treaty agrees to recognize boundaries as they existed in 1810.

1881

Argentine-Chilean boundary treaty divides Isla Grande, using a meridian as boundary and stating islands south of Beagle Channel belong to Chile; those east, to Argentina.

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Supplementary accord to 1881 treaty states that Argentina could claim no territory on Pacific side nor Chile on Atlantic side of meridian passing through Cape Horn.

1902

Treaty assigns Britain role of arbiter in Argentine-Chilean territorial disputes.

1915

Argentina formally protests Chilean occupation of Picton, Nueva, and Lennox at eastern end of Beagle Channel.

1971

Increased tensions over Beagle Channel issue results in agreement to call upon Great Britain to arbitrate; London refers case to International Court of Justice.

1977

Britain ratifies unanimous decision from ICJ that recognizes Chilean ownership of disputed islands and that generally supports Chilean positions. Chilean agrees with findings; Argentina defers decision.

1978

Argentina rejects decision (January) and declares it null and void. Presidents of two countries meet to reconcile differences.

1979

Declaration signed (January) by which two nations agree to defuse situation and to accept offer of Vatican to mediate.

1984

Vatican award (October) is accepted, approved by popular referendum in Argentina, and ratified (though narrowly) by Argentine Senate.

1985

Exchange of ratifications (May) takes place at Vatican.

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Belize-Guatemala

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Belize-Guatemala

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Belize-Guatemala Border

MEXICO

GUATEMALA

BELIZE

HONDURAS

TOLEDO DISTRICT

Current 12-kilometer Guatemalan territorial claim

Former Guatemalan territorial claim

Belizean-proposed 3-mile territorial sea limit

Caribbean Sea

Gulf of Honduras

Key Locations: Tintal Camp, Orange Walk, Guinea Grass, Hill Bank, Belize City, Belmopan, Melchor de Mencos, Garbutt's Fall, Banque Viejo del Carmen, Millionario, Dangriga, Poptún, San Antonio, Pueblo Viejo, Punta Gorda, Livingston, Puerto Barrios, El Golfete, Sapidilla Cays, Ranguana Cay, St. Georges Cay, Belize City, Belmopan, Millionario, Dangriga, Poptún, San Antonio, Pueblo Viejo, Punta Gorda, Livingston, Puerto Barrios, El Golfete, Sapidilla Cays, Ranguana Cay, St. Georges Cay.

Rivers: Rio Usumacinta, Rio Chama, Rio Mopan, Rio Mechuquira, Rio Cancuén, Rio Sarstún, Rio Sarstún.

Geographical Features: Lago Petén Itzá, Flores, seasonally inundated, mangrove, marsh, Barrier Reef, Bahía de Amatique.

Scale: 1:1,400,000
0 20 Kilometers
0 20 Miles

Legend:
— International boundary
— Road

Coordinates: 89, 90, 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0

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Border Basics

The 266-kilometer-long Belize-Guatemala boundary was defined by a treaty between Great Britain and Guatemala, signed in 1859. In accordance with treaty provisions, a joint boundary commission met during the period 1860-61 and placed 31 markers, of which the most important were those marking points where the boundary intersected the Belize River and the River Sarstoon. In 1928-30 another joint commission inspected the boundary, verified the location of the markers, and erected new concrete pillars where the boundary intersected the two rivers. Additional auxiliary markers were reportedly placed. In the late 1950s the boundary alignment was rechecked.

The Belize-Guatemala boundary extends due south from its tripoint with the Mexico border (17° 49'N) for 89 kilometers in a straight line to its intersection with the Belize River. This segment crosses rolling, limestone terrain covered by dense tropical forest or scrub. Except where the Belize to Guatemala Highway crosses the boundary, this northern border area is essentially unpopulated. The southern section of the boundary, about 137 kilometers in length, is also a straight line, but aligned slightly west of due south. There are a few settlements near where a Guatemalan road approaches the border at the River Sarstoon, but otherwise this section of the border is also largely devoid of people. The boundary crosses rugged, forested hills and mountains; in some places elevations reach 1,000 meters. At the River Sarstoon the boundary turns east and follows the midchannel of the river for about 40 kilometers to the Gulf of Honduras. This section of the border is low lying, covered by forests or swamps, and virtually uninhabited.

Belize-Guatemala**Significant Developments**

Belize, prior to gaining its independence in September 1981, had completed talks with Britain and Guatemala that had resulted in a tripartite agreement concluded in March 1981, termed the Heads of Agreement. Of the 16 topics or points of discussion agreed to, the most important were use by Guatemala of Ranguana and Sapodilla Cays, located a short distance off the

coast; unimpeded Guatemalan access to the sea; improvement of the road from Belize City to the Guatemalan border; and upon notification of clarifying agreements, Guatemalan recognition of Belize as an independent state. Negotiations (April-July) based on the Heads of Agreement foundered on Guatemalan insistence of unlimited rights in perpetuity to the cays and proposals to establish naval facilities on them, an interpretation of the agreement rejected by the British and Belizeans. The proposed Guatemalan use of the cays also prompted a protest from Honduras, which reasserted its claim to the Sapodilla Cays and the division of the surrounding sea implicit in its claim. When Britain announced that Belize would be granted independence in September, despite failure to agree on the issues raised in the Heads of Agreement, Guatemala refused to recognize Belize and renewed its claim to the entire territory.

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Between 1980 and 1984 there have been several incidents of Guatemalan settlers found clearing land on the Belizean side of the boundary, mostly in the area near Pueblo Viejo and southward (from 16° 15'N to 16° 00'N). Different large-scale maps covering the border area vary upward of 4 kilometers in their portrayal of the boundary alignment. Belize has proposed a joint border mapping survey to clarify the boundary discrepancy.

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Frontier History

The dispute over Belize, called British Honduras until independence, had its origin in the 17th century with the founding of a settlement by English timbercutters and their slaves at the mouth of the Belize River. Log cutting was profitable, and the settlement grew. Over the following 150 years, there were periodic attacks by the Spanish who objected to this non-Spanish enclave in their Central American territories. It was not until the Treaty of Paris (1763) that Spain recognized the rights of British settlers to engage in the logwood industry, although not renouncing Spanish sovereignty over the area. Spanish attacks, however, continued until 1798 when Spain was defeated in a small naval battle off the coast.

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When the Spanish colonies overthrew the Spanish colonial regime in 1821, Mexico and Guatemala became independent and both claimed Belize under

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rights of sovereignty passing from the Spanish Crown to its successor states. Mexico and Great Britain agreed by treaty (1893) to delimit the British Honduras-Mexico boundary, but Guatemala's claims continued and were based on the area controlled by the captaincy-general of Guatemala under Spanish rule that included within its territory Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and the territory of Belize. Although the frontier agreement of 1859, which defined the border between British Honduras and Guatemala, was supposed to end the dispute, one of the clauses in the agreement called for construction of a road (Article 7) linking the two countries. Various misunderstandings and disagreements over the respective contributions of Britain and Guatemala in the construction of the road eventually resulted in dispute. In time, Guatemala claimed that failure to implement Article 7 was entirely Britain's fault and justified a renunciation of the treaty, including the provisions of Article 1 that defined the boundary. In discussions and notes exchanged over this issue, Britain rejected the Guatemalan interpretation of events and its invalidation of the border treaty. []

After World War II, Great Britain suggested that the dispute be referred to the International Court of Justice for resolution—a proposal rejected by Guatemala. In 1965 a joint British-Guatemalan request that the United States act as mediator was accepted, but the proposed solution (1968) did not call for Belizean sovereignty and thus was rejected by Belizean officials—a stand supported by Great Britain. []

Informal talks commenced in the early 1970s, were broken off when Britain reinforced its military forces in Belize, then resumed briefly in 1975. By then pressure began to build through resolutions passed by the United Nations General Assembly reaffirming Belizean rights to self-determination and independence and calling for negotiations. New talks began in 1976 and continued intermittently until Belize was granted independence in 1981. []

Current Developments and Outlook

Although Guatemala's claim to Belize has always been bolstered by military preparations and deployments in the border area, Belize has countered by requesting the continued presence of British military forces amounting to 1,800 personnel, plus aircraft, to

bolster Belize's tiny defense force. Several formal and informal tripartite meetings held since 1982 between Belize, Guatemala, and British representatives, have produced a narrowing of claims, but no agreements. Guatemala, which initially claimed about one-sixth of Belize in these talks (Toledo, the southernmost district), has scaled its territorial demands to a more modest proposal of a strip of land some 12 kilometers wide along the coast running north from the River Sarstoon to the Moho River. This would give Guatemala unambiguous sovereignty over access to the Gulf of Honduras. Belize at one time put forward a proposal for joint development of a strip of territory about 3 kilometers wide on either side of the River Sarstoon boundary, a proposal rejected by Guatemala. Belize has attempted to accommodate Guatemalan demands for unimpeded access to the Gulf of Honduras by proposing to limit its territorial seas to a 3-mile limit from the River Sarstoon north to the Moho River. A line drawn from this point to another point 3 miles south of the Sapodilla Cays would provide maritime access for Guatemala. Guatemala, however, holds to its demand for acquisition of a strip of territory along the Belizean coast. []

Guatemalan claims to Belize, however, have moderated with the adoption of softer and more flexible language in the constitution adopted by Guatemala's Constituent Assembly in 1985. The claim of sovereignty over Belize, stated in 1965 and 1982 constitutions, has been dropped and replaced by wording stating: "The executive remains empowered to make efforts to resolve the situation of the rights of Guatemala with respect to Belize . . ." subject to a referendum on any agreement reached. This de facto acceptance of Belize's independence and right to a separate existence should assist negotiators once talks are resumed. Guatemala also is now under civilian rule for the first time in many years, and President Cerezo is more willing to resolve the dispute than previous military regimes. Nevertheless, major differences remain and any resolution of the dispute likely will involve prolonged discussions and hard bargaining. []

Political factors weigh heavily in the actions of both countries. The longstanding claim of sovereignty over the entire territory of Belize makes it difficult for Guatemala to negotiate without some face-saving

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territorial concession. Belize, as the much smaller, militarily weaker, and economically dependent of the two countries, believes that its offers have been fair. Although joint development, lease, or condominium arrangements are possible, any ceding of Belizean territory would be extremely difficult to sell domestically. The inability to agree at the New York meetings held in February 1985 postponed further substantive talks until sometime after the Guatemalan elections in November 1985 and the installation of a new government in January 1986.

Border Treaties and Key Dates

1798

British settlers in Belize are victorious over Spanish in naval battle at St. Georges Cay; traditional Belizean date of independence.

1821

Spanish colonies achieve independence and territories under Spanish Crown accede to them.

1859

Treaty is signed (30 April) between Britain and Guatemala delimiting boundary (Article 1) and providing for commissioners to mark the boundary (Articles 2 and 3).

1861

Commissioners meet and place markers at critical points (at Belize River and River Sarstoon).

1862

Belize is given colonial status as British Honduras.

1863

Supplementary convention directs Britain to pay Guatemala for building road connecting Belize City with the capital of Guatemala. (The 1859 treaty, Article 7, called for joint construction of said road.) Guatemala does not ratify convention.

1867

Britain announces that Guatemala's failure to ratify 1863 convention released Britain from obligations of 1859 treaty; Guatemala responds by stating it was not bound to treaty and that Britain had lost its sovereign rights to Belize territory.

1928-30

Joint commissioners are appointed to check boundary markers; new concrete markers are placed on south side of Belize River, near Garbutt's Fall, and on north bank of River Sarstoon. Both governments ratify boundary commission's report.

1940

Britain offers choice of three methods of arbitration, but Guatemala rejects offers and repeats assertion that 1859 treaty is null and void.

1946-48

Efforts to have International Court of Justice hear the case fails.

1965

Britain and Guatemala request US Government mediation.

1968-69

After many drafts and countless meetings, final draft treaty is published; British Honduras rejects final draft.

1970-78

Periodic negotiations make little progress; Britain reinforces its military garrison following Guatemalan troop movements (1971) near border.

1980

Tripartite talks begin in May; UN General Assembly votes 139-0 (11 November) that Belize should be granted independence by end of 1981.

1981

Agreement is reached (Britain, Guatemala, and Belize) on 16 March—the so-called Heads of Agreement—on topics to be discussed to resolve the Belize controversy. Talks founder on interpretation (16 July) of the document; Belize is granted independence (21 September); and Guatemala reasserts claim to all of Belize.

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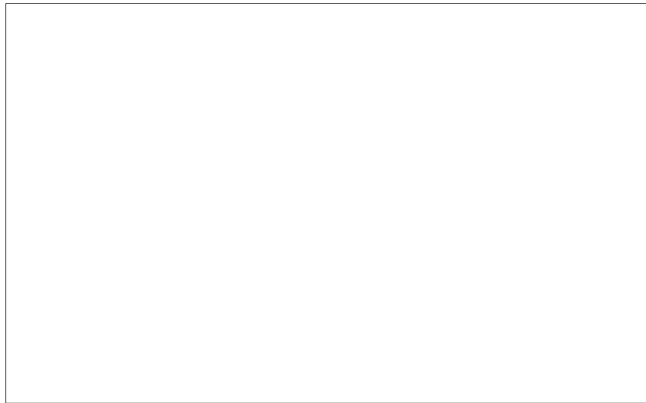
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1982-85

Periodic discussions are held in attempt to resolve controversy; some progress is made in narrowing differences and defining specifics. Guatemala's Constituent Assembly (May 1985) drops outright claim to Belize in draft constitution, substituting and adopting wording that calls for efforts to resolve Guatemalan rights to Belize.

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Bolivia-Chile-Peru

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Bolivia-Chile-Peru

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This map illustrates the complex border region between Peru, Bolivia, and Chile, highlighting historical territorial changes and proposed economic development areas. The main map shows the following features:

- Peru:** Includes the Tacna Department, Arica Province, and the Altiplano region. Key cities shown are Tacna, Arica, Pisco, and Iquique. The Rio Lauca and Rio Desaguadero are also depicted.
- Bolivia:** Shows the proposed sea-access corridor and the Bolivian-Chile boundary delineated in 1904-05. Key cities include Charaña, Villa Industrial, Churina, and Ausipar.
- Chile:** Displays the original Bolivia-Peru boundary, the Bolivian-Chile boundary, and the Zone of shared nitrate exploration between Bolivia and Chile in 1866. Key cities include Uyuni, San Pablo, Calama, Tocopilla, Mejillones, Antofagasta, Taltal, and Chañaral.
- Argentina:** Partially visible on the eastern edge of the map.
- South Pacific Ocean:** Located to the south of the Chilean coast.
- Historical and Proposed Boundaries:**
 - Territory occupied by Chile 1883-1929:** Indicated by a dashed line.
 - Territory lost by Peru, Treaty of Ancon, 1883:** Indicated by a solid line.
 - Territory lost by Bolivia during the War of the Pacific 1883:** Indicated by a solid line.
 - Zone of shared nitrate exploration between Bolivia and Chile, 1866:** Indicated by a hatched area.
 - Proposed sea-access corridor:** Indicated by a dashed line.
 - Proposed joint economic development area 1976:** Indicated by a hatched area.
- Geographical Features:** The Atacama Desert, Rio Lauca, Rio Desaguadero, Rio San Jose, Rio Loa, Rio Salado, and Rio Luján are shown.
- Infrastructure:** Railroads and roads are marked with lines.
- Scale:** 1:6,200,000 (0 to 100 Kilometers / 0 to 100 Miles).
- Legend:**
 - International boundary (solid line)
 - Railroad (line with cross-ticks)
 - Road (dashed line)

Inset A: A detailed view of the Tacna region, showing the Rio Caplina, Rio Lauca, and the proposed sea-access corridor. Scale: 1:2,000,000 (0 to 25 Kilometers / 0 to 25 Miles).

Inset B: A detailed view of the proposed joint economic development area, showing the Rio Caplina, Rio Lauca, and the proposed sea-access corridor. Scale: 1:750,000 (0 to 8 Kilometers / 0 to 8 Miles).

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Bolivia-Chile-Peru**Border Basics**

The Chile-Peru and Bolivia-Chile boundaries define territorial arrangements that resulted from the War of the Pacific (1879-84), causing Bolivia to lose its coastal territory and shrinking Peru's coastal lands. A readjustment of the boundary, specifically Bolivia's attempt to obtain a corridor to the sea, has been a contentious issue ever since.

The Chile-Peru border area, where future territorial revisions may occur, consists of a 160-kilometer-long boundary extending from the Pacific inland to the border tripoint with Bolivia. The boundary was delimited by treaty in 1929 and demarcated the following year with 80 markers. The treaty alignment places the boundary, depending on local terrain conditions, approximately 10 kilometers north of the Arica-La Paz railroad. The alignment of the boundary is not disputed.

The border terrain near the coast consists of extremely arid country (the Atacama Desert)—cut by intermittent stream valleys (quebradas)—then abruptly changes inland to the rapidly ascending western slopes of the Andes where elevations of from 4,000 to 5,000 meters are reached. The final 27 kilometers of the boundary is a straight line across the Altiplano—a high mountain plateau in the Andes. The border

area is sparsely populated; many sections are uninhabited. The major city near the border is the Chilean port of Arica, about 15 kilometers south of the boundary.

The 860-kilometer-long Bolivia-Chile boundary extends north to south between border tripoints with Peru and Argentina. The boundary was defined by a 1904 treaty, modified by a 1907 protocol, and is fixed by 96 points. The boundary alignment follows either straight-line segments drawn from these points, which are mostly mountain peaks, or follows prominent ridge lines.

The border lies along the western margin of the 3,600-meter high plain, the Altiplano, but considerably higher, snowcapped peaks upward to 5,000 meters also mark the border area. Many of the high mountains are flanked by shallow, saline lakes and extensive salt flats. A few roads and trails cross the sparsely populated and desolate frontier. Settlements usually are in conjunction with mining activities and in areas where cultivation is possible in irrigated valleys or near grazing lands.

Significant Developments

During 1976-77, Bolivia's primary foreign policy objective of regaining access to the Pacific was within reach in the aftermath of a Chilean proposal to grant Bolivia a land corridor to the sea. These hopes were dashed, however, by the stringent concessions demanded by Chile—in particular a requirement for a territorial concession elsewhere—and by a later Peruvian counterproposal that introduced additional territorial and jurisdictional complications. Peru's compliance in any territorial readjustment in this area is stipulated by a provision of the agreement signed in 1929 between Peru and Chile. Despite talks that

became deadlocked in 1977, which led Bolivia to break off diplomatic relations with Chile in 1978, the proposals provide a framework for future discussions and eventual settlement of the dispute. In 1985 Bolivia introduced the issue at the Organization of American States (OAS) and the United Nations in an attempt to regain momentum toward a settlement.

Frontier History

No common boundary had been defined when Bolivia and Chile attained their independence from Spain early in the 19th century. Bolivia claimed a strip of

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coastal territory extending from the Rio Loa (22°00'S) to the Rio Salado (26°20'S) corresponding to part of the Atacama—the barren coastal desert thought at the time to possess little value—but including the port of Antofagasta. When valuable deposits of nitrates (from guano deposits) were discovered, Chile advanced (1842) its claims northward overlapping those of Bolivia. Periodic discussions between the two countries over a border settlement made little progress until talks, begun much earlier, were resumed in 1858. A border settlement was reached (1866) establishing the boundary at the 24th parallel. The terms of the agreement also provided that the two countries would share equally in the revenues from nitrate extraction in an area extending from 23°S to 25°S. []

In 1874 a dispute arose when Bolivia attempted to levy an additional tax on a Chilean nitrate company operating in the joint revenue area. Efforts to resolve the problem failed, and in 1879 Chile declared war on Bolivia. When Chile's request to Peru for a statement of neutrality was not forthcoming (Peru and Bolivia had earlier signed a secret military agreement), Chile declared war on Peru as well. Despite manpower advantages possessed by the Peruvian-Bolivian alliance, Chile's modern military forces quickly defeated a combined Peruvian-Bolivian Army. The Chilean fleet controlled the seas and blockaded the ports, and in 1881 Chilean troops seized Peru's capital, Lima, placing it under occupation through 1883 until a peace treaty was negotiated. []

By terms of the Treaty of Ancon (1883), Peru ceded to Chile "in perpetuity and unconditionally" the province of Tarapaca. The fate of the two northern districts of Arica and Tacna, however, was postponed for 10 years, after which a plebiscite was to be held to determine ownership. []

Although Chile and Bolivia signed a truce (1884) leaving Chile in occupation of former Bolivian territory north from the old boundary along the 24th parallel to the Rio Loa, the two countries were unable to reach agreement on a peace treaty until 1904. This agreement confirmed Chile's sovereignty over Bolivia's former Atacama territory and provided for delimitation of their common boundary in the Andes.

The treaty also called for Chile to construct a railroad from the port of Arica to La Paz, but allowed Bolivia full and free rights of commercial transit through Chilean territory to Pacific ports. Peru protested the treaty and warned that its own rights to the Tacna and Arica districts were not abrogated by the 1904 agreement. []

Plans for a plebiscite in Tacna and Arica began in 1883, but years of negotiation between Chile and Peru came to naught when the legislative bodies in the two countries could not agree to various proposals. During the 1920s the United States attempted unsuccessfully to arbitrate. Finally a suggestion by the United States (1928) to resume direct negotiations—diplomatic relations had been severed since 1910—was accepted and an agreement reached (1929) that left Arica to Chile but returned Tacna to Peru. The treaty provided for a mixed boundary commission to demarcate the boundary. An important complementary protocol stated that neither state without the consent of the other could cede all or any part of the territory that by treaty terms remained under their respective sovereignties. []

Since Bolivia's defeat in the "Pacific War," successive governments have pressed for some form of agreement that would restore Bolivia's access to the Pacific. Although Bolivia narrowed its options in 1937 when it signed a treaty with Peru relinquishing future claims to Peruvian territory, diplomatic initiatives continued. Following improved relations between Bolivia and Chile after the overthrow of the Allende regime in 1973, Chile proposed (December 1975) that a land corridor under Bolivian sovereignty be extended from Bolivia to the sea and from the Peru border south to include the Arica-La Paz railroad. In return, Chile demanded territorial compensation equal to the territory lost in forming the corridor, that Bolivia pay for the Chilean section of the railroad and drop its objections to Chilean use of the Rio Lauca waters, and that the territory exchanged would be demilitarized. Bolivia, though happily accepting the corridor idea and a port on the Pacific, objected to all of Chile's demands, especially to any territorial concession and Chilean use of the Laucan waters. []

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Peru, apparently surprised by Chile's offer, made a counterproposal late in 1976. Although accepting the corridor concept, Peru suggested that Bolivian sovereignty stop short of the ocean and that the area along the coast and inland for a short distance become an economic development area to be administered jointly by Peru, Chile, and Bolivia. In addition, a trinational port authority would be established for Arica.

Chile rejected Peru's counterproposal and, despite attempts over the next year to find common grounds, the talks broke off in 1977. Unhappy over the lack of progress, Bolivia severed relations with Chile in 1978.

Current Developments and Outlook

In 1984 President Betancur of Colombia proposed that Chile and Bolivia resume talks. Despite some diplomatic contacts and probing in late 1984 and early 1985, discussions were broken off without visible signs of progress. Periodic resolutions at meetings of the Organization of American States and expressions of support for Bolivia's aspirations to gain access to the sea have not moved the two countries toward serious negotiations. Chile rejects and does not recognize OAS authority concerning a territorial issue. In late 1985 the Bolivian Government announced its readiness to resume negotiations with Chile.

In late 1985 the Foreign Ministers of Chile and Peru met and made some progress in a "final" implementation of the terms of their 1929 treaty under which Peru lost the province of Arica. Treaty provisions called for Chile to construct for Peruvian use dock facilities at Arica and a customs house, construction of which are under way, and a railroad station over which a dispute continues as to its location. A factor inhibiting progress is Chile's fear of development of a Peruvian enclave in Arica. Additional bilateral talks are planned by the two countries.

Despite a lack of progress in the Bolivian maritime access problem, when talks resume they will probably be built on the proposals made during the 1976-77 discussions. These proposals include ceding a corridor to Bolivia, building a port north of Arica for Bolivia's use, and joint development and administration—or possibly international authority—over the port and

immediate coastal area. A critical factor to the success of an agreement reached by negotiators will be public support for the particular proposal. Bolivian leaders discovered, for example, that while an overwhelming majority of Bolivians support the goal of a corridor, unified public approval for a particular formula, particularly one involving territorial compensation in exchange, is far from certain. Bolivia's strong objections to ceding territory to Chile in exchange for a corridor was a major stumblingblock to progress in the 1976-77 talks. Peru also was reluctant to agree to a corridor for Bolivia in an area once part of Peru. Although a settlement may have some economic consequences, for example, trinational development plans for the port area and its hinterland, the heart of the dispute remains one of nationalism and pride over territorial changes caused by war.

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Border Treaties and Key Dates

1818-24

Chile, Bolivia, and Peru secure independence from Spain. Bolivia occupies a portion of the Atacama between Peru and Chile.

1842

Discovery of nitrates causes Chile to claim part of the Atacama controlled by Bolivia.

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1866

Following negotiations over many years, Bolivia and Chile sign border treaty setting border at 24°S but with each country to share equally in revenue from nitrate mining between 23°S to 25°S.

1873

Peru and Bolivia secretly sign military alliance treaty.

1874

Bolivia places additional taxes on Chilean companies operating in common area in the Atacama.

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1879

Failure to resolve taxation issue causes Chile to declare war on Bolivia and, later, on Peru when La Paz did not issue a statement of neutrality.

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Chile defeats joint Bolivian-Peruvian Army, blockades ports, and occupies Lima.

1883

Peru and Chile sign treaty of Ancon, Peru cedes Tarapaca district to Chile; sovereignty over the Tacna-Arica districts is to be decided after 10 years by plebiscite.

1884

Bolivia and Chile sign truce ending war of the Pacific. Chilean forces withdraw from Lima.

1904

Bolivian-Chilean treaty is signed, reestablishing peace, confirming Chilean ownership of Bolivian Atacama territory, and providing for demarcation of Bolivia-Chile border.

1929

Following lengthy, off-and-on-again negotiations, Chile and Peru agree to divide territory—Arica to Chile and Tacna returned to Peru. Provision in treaty states that no territory originally belonging to Peru could be ceded to a third country without Peru's agreement.

1975

Chile proposes to grant Bolivia a land corridor to Pacific in exchange for Bolivian concessions.

1976

Peru makes counterproposal of economic development zone on coast and joint control of port of Arica.

1976-77

Talks are held but are inconclusive.

1978

Bolivia breaks off diplomatic relations with Chile over failure to reach agreement.

1984

Colombia attempts to reactivate talks, but preliminary discussions break off without visible progress.

1985

Bolivia raises issue in the United Nations and in the annual meeting of the OAS.

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Colombia-Nicaragua

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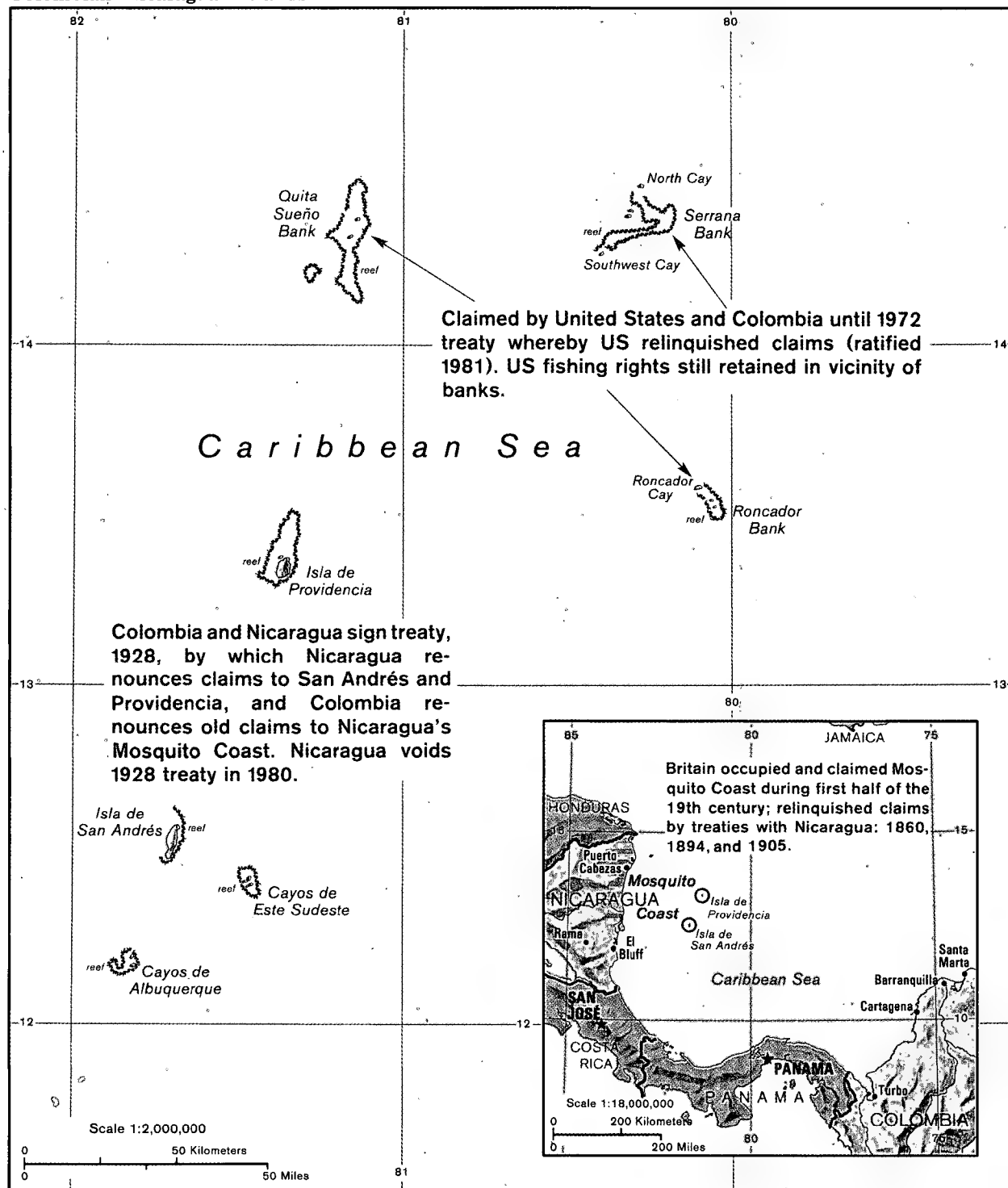


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Colombian-Nicaraguan Islands



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Colombia-Nicaragua

Border Basics

Several small Caribbean islands, cays, and banks are in dispute between Colombia and Nicaragua. The islands, which together form the San Andres and Providencia Archipelago, are only 225 to 260 kilometers east of Nicaragua but about 600 to 700 kilometers north of Colombia. All of the islands are small but the physical character, habitability, and use of each varies:

- *Quita Sueno Bank is an extensive underwater reef about 45 kilometers from north to south and with a variable width; the tiny bits of "land" on the bank are reportedly submerged at high tide, according to US officials who examined the area in 1970 for the purpose of establishing a legal position in preparation for future maritime claims.*
- *Serrana Bank, about 100 kilometers due east of Quita Sueno, is also an extensive coral reef some 30 kilometers in length and possessing two cays. Southwest Cay, about 2.5 square kilometers in area, traditionally has provided transient shelter for fishermen from San Andres who collect birds' eggs and guano. An unmanned navigation light is located on the cay. North Cay is smaller and lower.*
- *Roncador Bank is located about 75 kilometers south of Serrana. It has a small cay on which there is an unmanned navigation light.*
- *Isla de Providencia (13° 20' N 81° 23' W) is about 7 kilometers by 5 kilometers in dimension and surrounded by dangerous reefs. The island is hilly and*

rugged, with elevations to 600 meters, and largely forested. There are limited tourist facilities. A small airstrip is located on the northern end of the island.

- *Cayos de Albuquerque (Albuquerque Cay) and Cayos de Este Sudeste (Southeast Cay) are located 35 and 25 kilometers, respectively, from Isla de San Andres. Albuquerque Cay is large enough to support a detachment of soldiers; Southeast Cay has a navigation light.*
- *Isla de San Andres, a long, narrow island about 14 by 4 kilometers, is surrounded by treacherous coral reefs. Although the terrain is less rugged than that of Providencia, San Andres is still moderately hilly (elevations to 80 meters) and forested. The population is divided between English-speaking blacks and Spanish-speaking Colombians, the latter found mainly in the urban and tourist areas in the northern end of the island. The main products of the island are coconuts, vegetable oil, and oranges. Tourism is the major legitimate business—the island also has a long history as a center for smuggling, including drug trafficking—and there are a number of hotels and related facilities in the urbanized northern end of the island. A modern airfield nearby is used by several airlines that cater to the tourist trade. The combined population of San Andres and Providencia is estimated at well over 20,000, with the majority of the people on San Andres.*

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Significant Developments

The dispute over the islands and cays of the San Andres and Providencia Archipelago, presumably resolved by treaties signed in 1928 (Colombia-Nicaragua) and 1972 (Colombia-United States) was reopened by Nicaragua in December 1979. Nicaragua's unilateral abrogation of the 1928 treaty (February

1980) led Colombia to recall its Ambassador for consultation, improve its defensive capabilities over the area, and publicize the legal basis for its occupation of the islands.

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Frontier History

The Nicaraguan-Colombian dispute over the San Andres and Providencia Archipelago is a mix of historical and political factors involving not only the two nations but also Great Britain and the United States. Colombia has claimed and occupied San Andres, the main island of the contested group, since early in the 19th century. Although the island apparently was discovered by Spanish explorers early in the 16th century, the first permanent settlers were English who arrived in 1629. African slaves were also brought to the island, and today their descendants (and other blacks who were settled on the island) comprise the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of San Andres. Spain was awarded the islands in 1786, and in 1822 Colombia began its occupation. []

Colombia's claim dates to a royal order (1803) whereby the Spanish Crown delegated the defense of the area to the Vice Royalty of Sante Fe de Bogota (of which present-day Colombia was a part). Nicaragua argues that the 1803 decree was a military order and that in 1806 the defense of the region was returned to the Captaincy-General of Guatemala, which then included present-day Nicaragua. Despite little or no administration from Colombia—or the federation of various political units that preceded the establishment of the United States of Colombia in 1863—various 19th-century treaties and agreements appear to confirm Colombian ownership of San Andres and adjacent islands. Additionally, ownership of the Mosquito Coast, the strip of low-lying coastal plain of Nicaragua fronting the Atlantic and inhabited by the fiercely independent Miskito Indians, was part of the dispute. []

During the 19th century the dispute was complicated by Britain's presence and influence in the coastal area. In 1850 Britain and the United States signed the Clayton-Bulwer Convention—designed to promote cooperation instead of confrontation as to future ship-canal projects across Nicaragua—that stipulated neither country would “assume or exercise any dominion over . . . the Mosquito Coast. . . .” Despite this pledge, it took further negotiations and several treaties between Nicaragua and Britain (1860, 1894, and 1905) to remove the last vestiges of British political influence from the area. []

The United States became involved in the dispute through granting (1868) James W. Jennett, a private citizen, who purportedly “discovered” Serrana and adjacent cays, the right to extract guano. Although it is unclear as to whether guano was actually extracted, the dispute between the United States and Colombia languished for several decades. []

The Barcenas Meneses-Esquerra Treaty signed between Nicaragua and Colombia (April 1928), appeared to resolve the dispute. By its terms, Colombia recognized Nicaraguan sovereignty over the Mosquito Coast in exchange for Nicaraguan acceptance of Colombian ownership of the San Andres and Providencia Archipelago. Article 1, however, excluded the question of jurisdiction over the adjacent cays of Roncador, Quito Sueno, and Serrana as a separate dispute between the United States and Colombia. The following month, the United States and Colombia exchanged notes recognizing that each claimed sovereignty over the cays and agreed to maintain the status quo: Colombia would not object to the maintenance of navigational aids by the United States (apparently installed during work on the Panama Canal) and Washington would have no objection to fishing operations by Colombian nationals in waters adjacent to the cays. Subsequently, Colombia agreed that the United States also retained fishing rights in the area. []

In the late 1960s, in the wake of reports of potential offshore oil resources, Nicaragua revived its claim to Quito Sueno on the basis of the cay's location on the continental shelf. In September 1972, the United States and Colombia, after some discussion, signed an agreement—known as the Saccio-Vasquez Carrizosa Treaty—by which the United States renounced its claim to the cays of Quito Sueno, Roncador, and Serrana. []

Current Developments and Outlook

After Nicaragua, under the Sandinistas, reasserted (February 1980) dormant claims to San Andres and Providencia, Colombia reacted by upgrading its military forces and readiness in the area. Ten-man detachments were posted on the Serrana, Rondador, and

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Albuquerque Cays, and a Navy corvette based at Cartagena was deployed for 30-day periods to the area to bring supplies and rotate personnel to these desolate outposts.

Politically, Colombia reacted by withdrawing its Ambassador to Nicaragua for several months and by publishing a "White Book" (1980) outlining the Colombian position on the dispute. Colombia in its statements counters the argument that the 1928 treaty was signed under pressure by noting that US troops had been invited to Nicaragua and that the 1928 treaty was the result of months and years of debate and negotiation. Nicaragua uses the "duress" argument as the basis for its abrogation of the 1928 treaty under which sovereignty over San Andres and Providencia had been renounced. Colombia's case is bolstered by its continuous, lengthy occupation and administration of the islands. The legal case for Colombian sovereignty over the cays, however, is less compelling. In late 1984 Colombian Foreign Minister Augusto Ramirez Ocampo stated that "Colombia has nothing to negotiate with Nicaragua," a statement repeated in 1986. Despite the occasional inflammatory rhetoric used by Nicaraguan leaders, Managua has played down the issue since 1981.

Border Treaties and Key Dates

1822

Colombia occupies San Andres following period of English, Spanish, and assorted claimants to the island.

1850

Britain and the United States sign the Clayton-Bulwer Convention over rights to build canal across Nicaragua; neither country can "exercise any dominion" over Mosquito Coast of Nicaragua.

1868

On claims of James W. Jennett, a United States citizen, the United States issues Jennett a certificate to extract guano on Serrana and adjacent cays, under provision of US Guano Act. Colombia objects to US action.

1890

Colombia in a series of notes protests to Nicaragua over interoceanic canal concession involving land on Mosquito Coast to which Colombia retained claims.

1905

Britain recognizes Nicaragua's full sovereignty over Mosquito Coast in Altaminano-Harrison Treaty.

1928

Nicaragua and Colombia sign treaty—Barcenas Meneses-Esquerria Treaty—recognizing Nicaraguan sovereignty over Mosquito Coast in exchange for Nicaraguan recognition of San Andres and Providencia, but excluding Roncador, Serrana, and Quita Sueno. Notes are exchanged between the United States and Colombia recognizing status quo in that the United States is to maintain navigation lights on the cays and Colombia is to retain its fishing rights in adjacent waters. The treaty was ratified in March 1930.

1972

Colombia and the United States sign Saccio-Vasquez Carrizosa Treaty by which the United States renounces claims to Roncador, Quito Sueno, and Serrana.

1980

New Sandinista regime in Nicaragua unilaterally declares null and void 1928 treaty (Colombia-Nicaragua) recognizing Colombian sovereignty over San Andres and Providencia; also claims adjoining cays.

1981

United States Senate ratifies Colombian-US agreement of 1972.

1982

Colombia "implements" 1972 treaty with the United States.

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Ecuador-Peru

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Ecuador-Peru**Border Basics**

The Ecuador-Peru boundary, about 1,420 kilometers in length, extends from the southern shore of the Golfo de Guayaquil on the Pacific across coastal plain, highlands, and interior lowlands to the tri-border point with Colombia. []

The border was defined by terms of the 1942 Rio Protocol, and most of it was demarcated between 1943 and 1947. The boundary was divided into two sections: a 631-kilometer western section with 99 markers; and a 789-kilometer eastern section where there were 65 border points identified. A 78-kilometer gap in the demarcation exists in the Cordillera del Condor area near the end of the eastern section of the boundary. The border terrain is highly varied, and numerous rivers and local water divides are used as delimitive features; numerous straight-line segments were also established in the desolate headwaters area of the Amazon. []

The western section of the boundary, extending south and east from the Pacific, mostly follows several different rivers across the coastal plain and the western slopes of the Andes. This section of the border is well populated, and several roads and numerous trails cross the border. Rivers also are used to mark the boundary as it descends the eastern slopes of the Andes after which water divides are followed until the boundary reaches the Santiago River. From here to the tripoint with the Colombia border, the boundary extends for some 700 kilometers across the numerous streams of the Upper Amazon Basin. The boundary alignment consists of straight-line segments that connect the confluences, or mouths, of rivers where they join one of the many Amazon tributaries. The border zone is heavily forested, sparsely populated, and lacks transportation. The population is limited to a few scattered Amerindian villages, some additional settlements, and a few military outposts. []

Significant Developments

Since the January 1981 clashes in the sector where the boundary was left undemarcated, the border area has been quiet with only occasional and minor incidents reported. In 1985 the flooding on rivers—the Rio Zarumilla, Rio Calvas, Rio Macara—forming the boundary in the southwestern section of the border has in a few places changed river courses, leading to disputes where bits of land previously on Ecuador's side of the border are now in Peru and vice versa. In one area, construction of a dike allegedly diverted the river. In September 1985 a joint technical group was formed to examine and verify the diversion in the courses of the rivers. []

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Frontier History

The Ecuadorean-Peruvian border dispute over some 200,000 square kilometers in the Upper Amazon Basin—the so-called Oriente or the Amazonian Triangle—traces its origins to the administrative structure of Spanish colonial times and the ambiguities and uncertainties of the division between the Vice Royalties of Peru and Nueva Granada (present-day Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador). The disputed area coincides with the former administrative district of Mainas (Maynas)—an administrative unit existing more on paper than as a functional unit—that was transferred back and forth between the two vice-royalties. In 1802 Mainas was administratively transferred back to the Vice-Royalty of Peru's jurisdiction. Upon gaining independence (Ecuador in 1822 and Peru in 1824), the two new states soon quarreled and fought a brief war (1828-29) over control of the Mainas area and other smaller border areas near Tumbes (on the coast) and Jaen. Gran Colombia, a federation of states Ecuador had joined on gaining its freedom, held the upper hand, and the Treaty of Guayaquil (1829) and the subsequent Mosquero-Pedmonte Protocol (1830) defined the boundary between the two states as following the Rio Marañon. []

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Before a boundary commission could mark the border, however, Ecuador withdrew (1830) from the federation, an act seized upon by Peru to renounce the

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Guayaquil treaty and its protocol. Peru argued that Ecuador, by separating from Gran Colombia after the treaty and protocol were signed, had forfeited its territorial rights. Shortly afterward, Peru and Ecuador signed a treaty of friendship and alliance stating that, until a boundary convention was signed, the two states would recognize "existing boundaries." (Ecuador cites this treaty as further evidence to support its contention that the Rio Marañon represented the boundary between the two states.) []

The boundary-territorial issue arose again in the 1850s, when Ecuador began making land grants in the disputed area and declared free navigation rights on several rivers flowing through Peru-claimed territory. Hostilities ensued that essentially consisted of a Peruvian blockade of Ecuador's ports. The agreement terminating the conflict, arranged with one of the Ecuadorian political factions, was later repudiated by both governments. The border issue remained unresolved, and in 1887 the two sides signed the Esponso-Bonifaz Treaty calling on the King of Spain to arbitrate the dispute. Bilateral efforts produced the Herrera-Garcia Treaty (1890) granting Ecuador frontage on a navigable portion of the Rio Marañon and access to the Amazon. Although Ecuador quickly ratified the treaty, the Peruvian Congress rejected the agreement. Additional efforts at mediation failed, and in 1905 Spain's Council of State began collecting documents in preparation for an arbitral award. The substance of the proposed award—which generally favored Peru—was leaked to the Ecuadoreans in 1910, causing great patriotic furor in Ecuador and bringing the two states to the verge of war. Additional mediation attempts failed and Spain withdrew as arbiter. []

In 1924 the two sides agreed once more (The Ponce-Castro Oyanguren Protocol) to submit their differences for arbitration, this time to the United States. Meanwhile, a Colombian-Peruvian boundary treaty, signed in 1922, in effect recognized Peru's sovereignty over most of the disputed area and weakened Ecuador's claim. Border tensions increased during the mid-1930s, and in 1936 the two countries sent delegations to Washington. Before the talks, Ecuador and Peru agreed to a status quo line that divided the contested area. Two years of discussions resulted in little progress and ended when Peru broke off talks in 1938.

Relations worsened and in July 1941 Peruvian troops invaded Ecuador, quickly overwhelming the outnumbered Ecuadoreans. The US entry into World War II hastened the pace of negotiations conducted at the meeting of foreign ministers of the American Republics, held in Rio de Janeiro in January 1942. In two weeks an agreement was hammered out defining a border largely favoring Peru's position. The Rio Protocol also provided for treaty guarantors—Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and the United States—to resolve differences, in case the two sides could not agree on the execution of the treaty. The procedures designed to convene and get agreement among the guarantors, however, were exceedingly cumbersome. []

The boundary was demarcated (1943-47), with the exception of a 78-kilometer stretch where, according to the agreement, it was to follow the water divide between the Santiago and Zamora Rivers. Through aerial photography and ground surveys, a major river system—the Cenepa—was discovered to intervene, and, consequently, no Santiago-Zamora water divide existed. Ecuador used this discrepancy to halt demarcation work and to demand a redefinition of the boundary—a proposal that Peru rejected. In 1960 Quito declared the 1942 Rio Protocol "null," an action later declared illegal by the guarantor states. Ecuador did not officially renounce the agreement, however, and has accepted its general provisions with the exception of the territory in the Cordillera del Condor sector where the undemarcated sector lies. []

During the 1960s and 1970s, the dispute was relatively quiet, though the discovery of oil reserves on the eastern slopes of the Andes has increased the economic importance of the disputed region. When the Ecuadorean and Peruvian Presidents were in Washington for the signing of the Panama Canal Treaty in 1977, President Carter used the occasion to suggest a reopening of the border issue and a renewed look at Ecuador's desire to have access to the Rio Marañon. Despite favorable portents, later talks between representatives of the foreign ministries broke down when Peru, reflecting military concerns, backed away from the Ecuadorean corridor idea. In January 1981 a serious border skirmish took place and ended with

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Peruvian forces evicting the Ecuadoreans from outposts they had established east of the Condor Mountains in the disputed area. A cease-fire was arranged by the four guarantor powers. []

A secondary border disagreement was over a small, isolated stretch of border located near the tripoint with Colombia. The dispute involved the original language of the Rio Protocol and the difficulty of interpreting which stream was the principal source of the Rio Lagartococha or Rio Zancudo. In 1945 a Brazilian arbitrator examined the problem and issued an opinion that was later modified (1947) on the basis of additional terrain information. Neither country accepted the award, as modified, nor appeared ready to take additional steps to reach a solution. Presumably, this minor difference would be resolved quickly if a broader agreement over the Cordillera del Condor area were reached. []

Current Developments and Outlook

Since the January 1981 border skirmishes, the border area has been relatively quiet. Minor incidents in 1983-84 were treated in low-key fashion. The present Ecuadorean regime, headed by President Febres-Cordero, has continued to play down border problems and disagreements. These include recurrent border river problems caused by changes in course resulting from floods, particularly along the Rio Zarumilla and Rio Calvas in the western section of the boundary. []

Ecuador for more than 150 years has had a goal of becoming an "Amazonian power," an objective thwarted by the 1942 Rio Protocol defining a border considerably west of the Rio Marañon. Although Ecuador's maps continued to show its boundary with Peru along the Rio Marañon (according to the 1830 protocol) and Quito's rhetoric has called for renegotiating the entire boundary, there has been more realism during confidential discussions. The case for a greater share of the Oriente territory suffers from Ecuador's inability to settle, let alone control, the area during the 19th century when ownership was in doubt. Quito's key objective now is to continue to delay full implementation of the 1942 convention and to try and gain a corridor to the Rio Marañon that would provide some territorial substance to its ancient objective of becoming an Amazonian power. Several exploratory proposals (see map) would provide varying

amounts of frontage on the Rio Marañon, though all would be upriver from rapids (Pongo de Manseriche)—the head of navigation immediately downstream (east) of the Rio Marañon's confluence with the Rio Santiago. Ecuadorean initiatives and financing to improve communications and provide for economic development of the region might be used to sweeten a proposal. []

Peru's official position continues to be that the terms of the Rio Protocol are valid, and its legality is upheld by the guarantor powers. In Peru's view the only remaining issue is to complete demarcation of the 78-kilometer gap. A decision by Peru to permit Ecuador some face-saving territorial adjustment will depend on the size and location of the area and on its actual (or perceived) military value that possession would grant. []

Despite an apparent willingness to settle for far less than their public statements suggest, Ecuadorean officials will find it politically difficult to gain support for a settlement without some territorial concession from archrival Peru. Highly popular governments and persuasive leaders in both countries will be required to hammer out an agreement that can gain popular support and secure parliamentary approval. []

Border Treaties and Key Dates

1802

Spain issues Royal Decree reattaching Mainas (Maynas) administrative unit—the Oriente—to Vice-Royalty of Peru from Vice-Royalty of Nueva Granada (Colombia-Venezuela). Ecuador asserts that decree applies only to military and ecclesiastical affairs; Peru rejects this interpretation.

1821-24

Peru declares independence but fights war to attain freedom in 1824.

1822

Ecuador proclaims independence and joins Gran Colombia federation.

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1828-29

Peru and Ecuador (as part of Gran Colombia) dispute ownership of Mainas and other border areas and fight brief war.

1829

Treaty of Guayaquil ends Peruvian-Ecuadorean conflict.

1830

Protocol of Mosquera-Pedemonte, supplement to Treaty of Guayaquil, establishes guidelines stating Rio Marañon as boundary.

Ecuador withdraws from Gran Colombia federation.

1832

Ecuador and Peru sign treaty of friendship and alliance stating existing boundaries should be observed until boundary convention negotiated.

1863

The settlement of Iquitos on Amazon and in disputed area is established by Peruvians.

1887

Peru and Ecuador agree to submit dispute to King of Spain for arbitration.

1890

Harrera-Garcia Treaty providing Ecuador frontage on navigable stretch of Rio Marañon is rejected by Peruvian Congress.

1905

Arbitration procedures started by Spain.

1910

Ecuador learns of arbitral award favorable to Peru, causing rioting in Ecuador; King of Spain withdraws as mediator.

1922

Colombian-Peruvian border agreement recognizes Peruvian control over much of disputed territory.

1936-38

Negotiations begin in Washington; Peru breaks off. A de facto line of separation, roughly dividing disputed territory equally, had been agreed upon.

1941

Ecuador and Peru engage in brief war. Peruvian troops rout Ecuadorean troops before cease-fire is arranged.

1942

Protocol of Rio de Janeiro defines boundary, ratified by both countries, and provides for demarcation.

1943-47

Joint commission demarcates all but 78-kilometer stretch where treaty wording is inconsistent with physical features; Ecuador refuses to proceed, claiming treaty is invalid and in need of renegotiation.

1960

Ecuador declares 1942 Rio Protocol null; the guarantor nations of the treaty state Ecuador's action illegal.

1978

Joint negotiations proposed by United States fail over question of Ecuadorean access to Rio Marañon.

1981

Fighting goes on between Peruvian and Ecuadorean troops in disputed area.

1985

Shifts in the Zarumilla, Calvas, and Macara Rivers result in slight territorial exchanges along the border that increase the concern of Ecuador and Peru.

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El Salvador-Honduras

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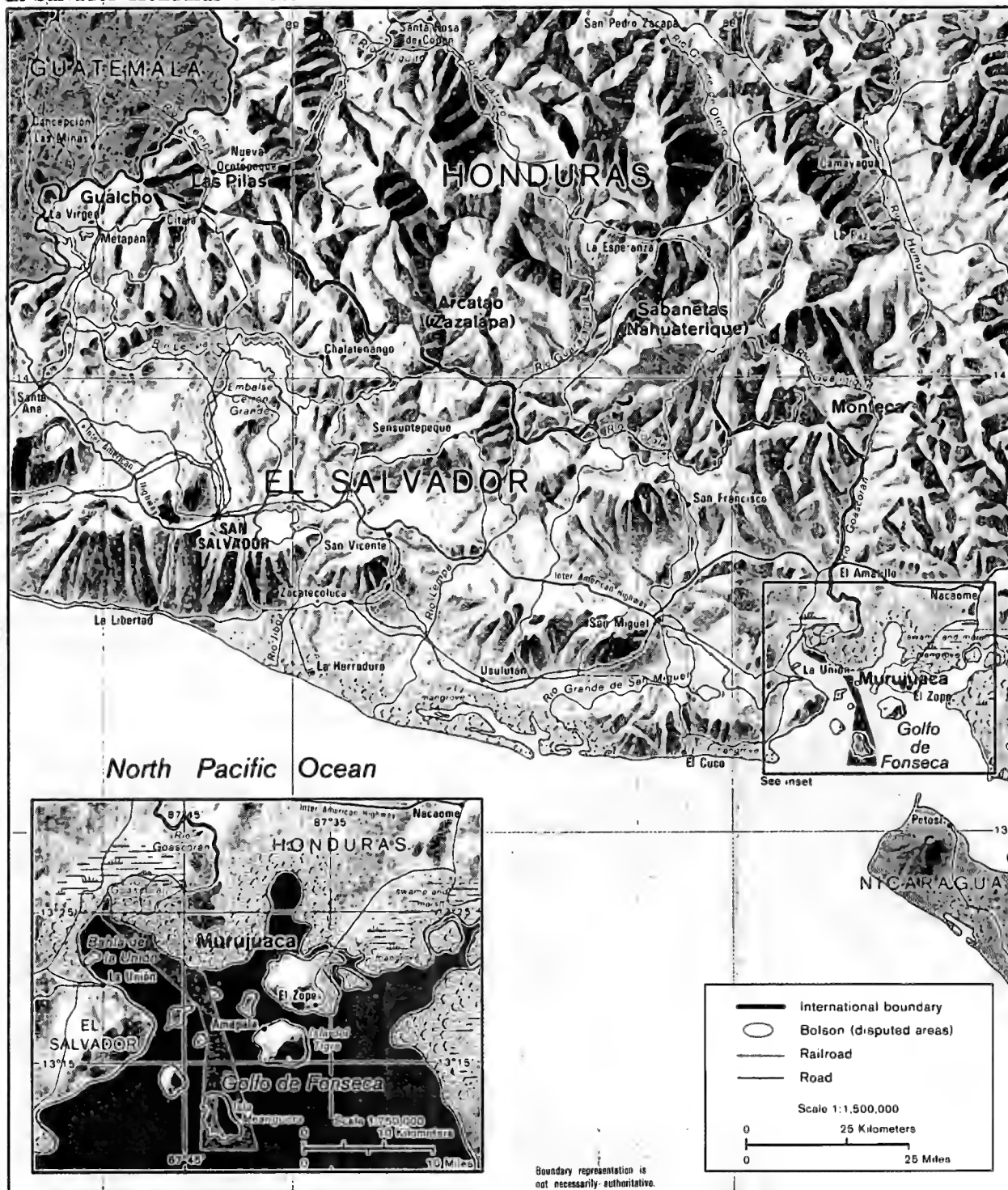


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El Salvador-Honduras Border



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El Salvador-Honduras

Border Basics

The 342-kilometer-long El Salvador-Honduras border extends roughly northwest-southeast from its tripoint with the Guatemala boundary before turning south for about 70 kilometers and terminating in the Golfo de Fonseca. Only limited boundary sections have been surveyed and demarcated. The El Salvador-Honduras peace treaty, signed in 1980, delimited about 60 percent of the border and provided for a commission to meet and negotiate a settlement of those border sections still in dispute. The disputed areas, commonly termed bolsones or pockets (of territory), total nearly 400 square kilometers and contain an estimated population of between 4,000 and 5,000 people. Also in dispute are the seaward extension of the boundary and the division of the Golfo de Fonseca. This dispute depends on the negotiations over the Murujuaca pockets, essentially the Goascoran Delta, and the location of the land boundary's terminal point. In turn, this affects island ownership in the gulf, the most important being Isla Meanguera.

The boundary meanders across mainly hilly to mountainous terrain covered by scrub or patchy forests. In some places, the boundary coincides with local water divides, but more commonly it follows rivers and streams. The highest border terrain is in the west toward Guatemala where several old volcanic peaks reach elevations ranging between 2,000 and 2,700 meters. The principal economic activity in the area is subsistence farming, including some grazing. During the May-October rainy season, the few roads in the border area and in disputed territory are frequently impassable. The disputed area bordering the Golfo de Fonseca consists mostly of swamp and marshy terrain near the mouth of the Rio Goascoran. A little land is available for farming and grazing. Isla Meanguera is a steep-sided volcanic island covered by grass and evergreen trees. The population is small and includes a fishing village and some scattered farm settlements.

Significant Developments

Despite authorization contained in the 1980 peace treaty for a joint border commission to negotiate territorial claims and public statements by the presidents of both countries urging greater speed, the pace of negotiations has been slow and progress limited. Survey and mapping work, including the placing of boundary markers in those areas where the boundary has officially been delimited, has also moved sluggishly because of frequent disagreements over minor points and the difficult terrain. Although Salvadoran military operations, with the occasional cooperation of the Honduran military, have somewhat limited use of the border areas and the *bolsones* as refuge areas and supply bases for Salvadoran insurgents, arms and supplies continue to be transferred across the border to insurgent camps inside El Salvador.

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Frontier History

The El Salvador-Honduras boundary was originally based on the limits of old Spanish administrative units and ecclesiastical districts. Honduras and El Salvador proclaimed their independence (1838-41), but neither country initially expressed interest in formally fixing their common border. But political conflict and disputes between the two countries quickly arose, usually accompanied by charges of interference in the affairs of each other. The isolated and generally rugged physical character of the border area lent some plausibility to accusations that the unmarked border zone harbored fugitives and provided areas from which antigovernment activities could be launched.

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After a dispute in 1861 between border towns over the limits of communal lands, the first of many joint Salvadoran-Honduran commissions was formed to settle differences. A preliminary agreement signed in 1880 called for delimitation of the entire border. In 1884 a boundary treaty, also known as the Letona-Cruz Agreement, was signed that delimited several short sections of the border. The Honduran legislature, however, refused to ratify the agreement, though the government agreed to use the 1884 delimitation until a new border agreement could be reached.

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Another treaty, negotiated and signed in 1895, contained provisions for delimitation, demarcation, and, if necessary, arbitration procedures to resolve border problems. Despite the intent of the agreement and an extension of the treaty's life through 1916, the two sides dallied and failed once more to reach a comprehensive border settlement. Another treaty was signed (1918) with provisions nearly identical to those of the 1895 treaty. Although the Honduran National Congress accepted the agreement after some minor revisions, the treaty was never presented to Salvador's legislative body for approval and no additional work was done. []

Another border issue arose over the division of the waters of the Golfo de Fonseca, one of the finest natural harbors in western Latin America. An agreement reached between Honduras and Nicaragua (1894) called for a boundary commission to delimit and mark their common border. In doing so, the commission divided the eastern half of the gulf (1900) through use of both straight-line segments and the equidistance method; the terminal point was placed in midgulf, south of Isla del Tigre. Later, when the United States signed a treaty with Nicaragua (1914), to obtain a 99-year lease that would permit construction of a naval base on Nicaraguan territory, protests from El Salvador and Costa Rica led to numerous legal questions that were referred to the Central American Court of Justice. The court issued its findings in 1917, holding that the gulf was a "historic bay" and a "closed sea" and thus common property of the three states that bordered it. The court also found that establishment of a naval base would compromise the security of El Salvador. Nicaragua rejected the court's findings, and the base was never built. In 1971 the United States terminated the treaty. []

No significant progress was made in resolving border differences over the next several decades. In 1935 Honduras renounced the 1884 Letona-Cruz Agreement that was the legal basis of the de facto border. Mapping photography of the border areas was acquired in the mid-1950s, and a ground survey of the boundary area was begun though not completed. In 1968 a new boundary agreement was reached, a product of yet another joint Honduran-Salvadoran border commission, but negotiations were interrupted

when the short-lived "Soccer War" erupted between the two countries in 1969. Negotiations were hampered and prolonged by heightened border friction caused by the deportation of thousands of Salvadoran migrants from Honduras, the evolution of the Salvadoran insurgency, and use of the border area by the guerrillas. A general peace treaty was finally signed on 30 October 1980 and ratified on 12 December 1980. Border issues were treated in detail: seven sections of the border were delimited (about 60 percent of the entire boundary); a joint boundary commission was authorized to demarcate those sections of the boundary delimited in the treaty and to provide specific guidance on what evidence would be permitted in negotiations over unresolved border territory; and arbitration was specified—the International Court of Justice—if agreement could not be reached by the end of 1985 on settling the territorial issues. []

The 1980 peace treaty also directed the joint boundary commission to resolve the legal questions concerned with division of the Golfo de Fonseca between the two countries. An important issue is the location of the terminal point of the land boundary that ends, according to the 1884 treaty, where the Rio Goascoran empties into the gulf. The dispute is over which of several channels in the extensive Goascoran Delta is the main mouth of the river. A critical issue for Honduras in the dispute is to secure access to the sea and to maritime resources. Nicaragua maintains that the 1900 agreement with Honduras remains in effect, and Honduras continues to honor in practice its maritime boundary with Nicaragua. []

Current Developments and Outlook

Pressures increased during 1985 for El Salvador and Honduras to reach a settlement in advance of the end-of-year deadline specified by the 1980 border treaty. Since the monthly meetings of the joint border commission had produced proposals from both sides on specific issues, such as the division of a particular *bolson*, but little overall progress, a "summit" approach was tried with the meeting (July) of Presidents Duarte (El Salvador) and Suazo (Honduras) at La Paz, Honduras. Comprehensive proposals and alternatives were discussed by the two leaders, but once

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again no overall agreement could be reached. Another comprehensive proposal for resolving the territorial issues, made by President Duarte in late September, provided the basis for confidential political discussions between representatives from each country in addition to the more formal monthly meetings of the joint boundary commission.

The primary sticking points in the prolonged negotiations have been the actual division of the six land areas in dispute and allocations of the Golfo de Fonseca waters. A division of the land areas is complicated by the use of historical records and old agreements because present settlement, communications, and even the terrain may differ markedly from the conditions present at the time the original agreements and records were made. Although the recent Salvadoran proposal of a Honduran sea corridor to be carved out of El Salvador's territorial waters seems workable, the details and related questions, such as rights to marine resources, remain stumblingblocks to an agreement. Other alternatives, for example, trade-offs involving the land border and maritime disputes, also are possible.

If bilateral talks fail, reliance on third-party mediation or the International Court of Justice to resolve the differences would follow. Reliance on the International Court of Justice, which Honduras is more inclined to favor, would most likely be lengthy and costly for both sides. Whatever decision is reached would probably provoke considerable public reaction and strain on the government in power. El Salvador prefers the route of mediation, assuming that some of the territorial disputes can be resolved by bilateral discussion. In a recent Latin American territorial quarrel, the Beagle Channel dispute between Argentina and Chile, the Vatican was used to mediate a solution that was accepted by both sides.

Border Treaties and Key Dates

1861

Dispute between border towns over communal lands forces Honduras and El Salvador to address border delimitation.

1884

Border convention (Letona-Cruz Agreement) is signed (April) defining border.

1885

Honduras abrogates 1884 agreement.

1886

Honduras and El Salvador agree to set up commission to delimit border and to follow the 1884 line until a new border is drawn.

1888

Agreement is reached on the use of the Rio Goascoran from its mouth to juncture with Rio Guajiniquil as the border. No further work done.

1895

Border convention is signed to delimit remainder of border. Never ratified despite extension of treaty to 1916.

1900

Honduras-Nicaragua Boundary Commission completes work on fixing boundary in Golfo de Fonseca that affects any Honduras-El Salvador delineation of maritime areas.

1917

Central American Court of Justice holds (9 March) that the Golfo de Fonseca is an historic bay possessed of the characteristics of a closed sea, and that the waters that form the entrance to the gulf "intermingle."

1918

An agreement is signed for yet another joint commission to resolve border questions. No progress made.

1935

Attempt to resolve tripoint of El Salvador-Honduras-Guatemala boundary results in Honduran renouncement of 1884 Letona-Cruz Agreement.

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1955

Joint cartographic survey is started to map border area.

1968

Mixed commission drafts treaty to resolve border differences.

1969

“Soccer War” erupts, caused in part by Salvadoran immigrants in Honduras and their expulsion in spring of 1969.

1976

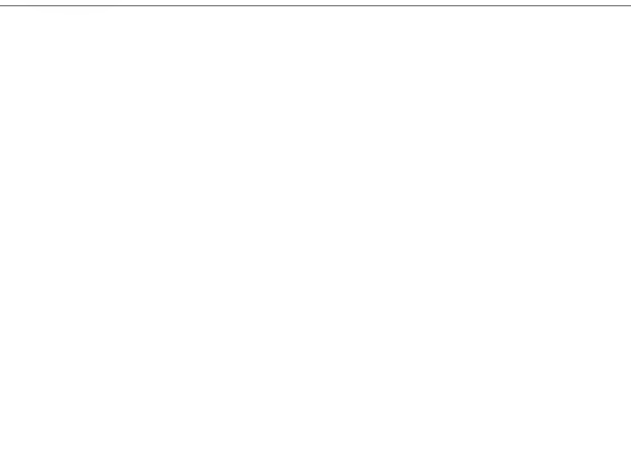
Mediation efforts are begun to resolve longstanding Honduran-Salvadoran issues, including border problems.

1980

Peace treaty is signed (30 October) and ratified (10 December) that includes provisions for establishing joint commission to demarcate border sections agreed to and to settle remaining territorial differences. Arbitration procedures are to be used if no agreement by late 1985.

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Falkland Islands
and Dependencies

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**Falkland Islands
and Dependencies**

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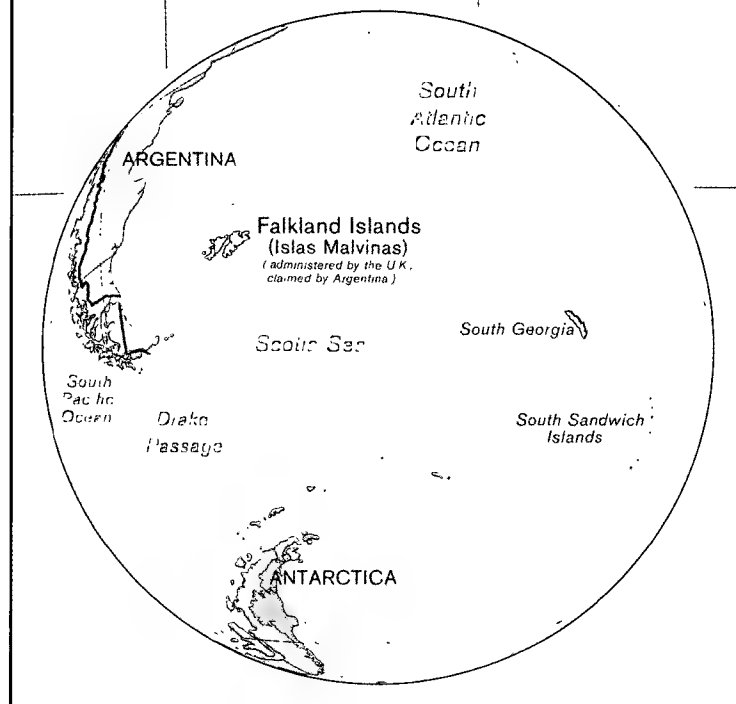
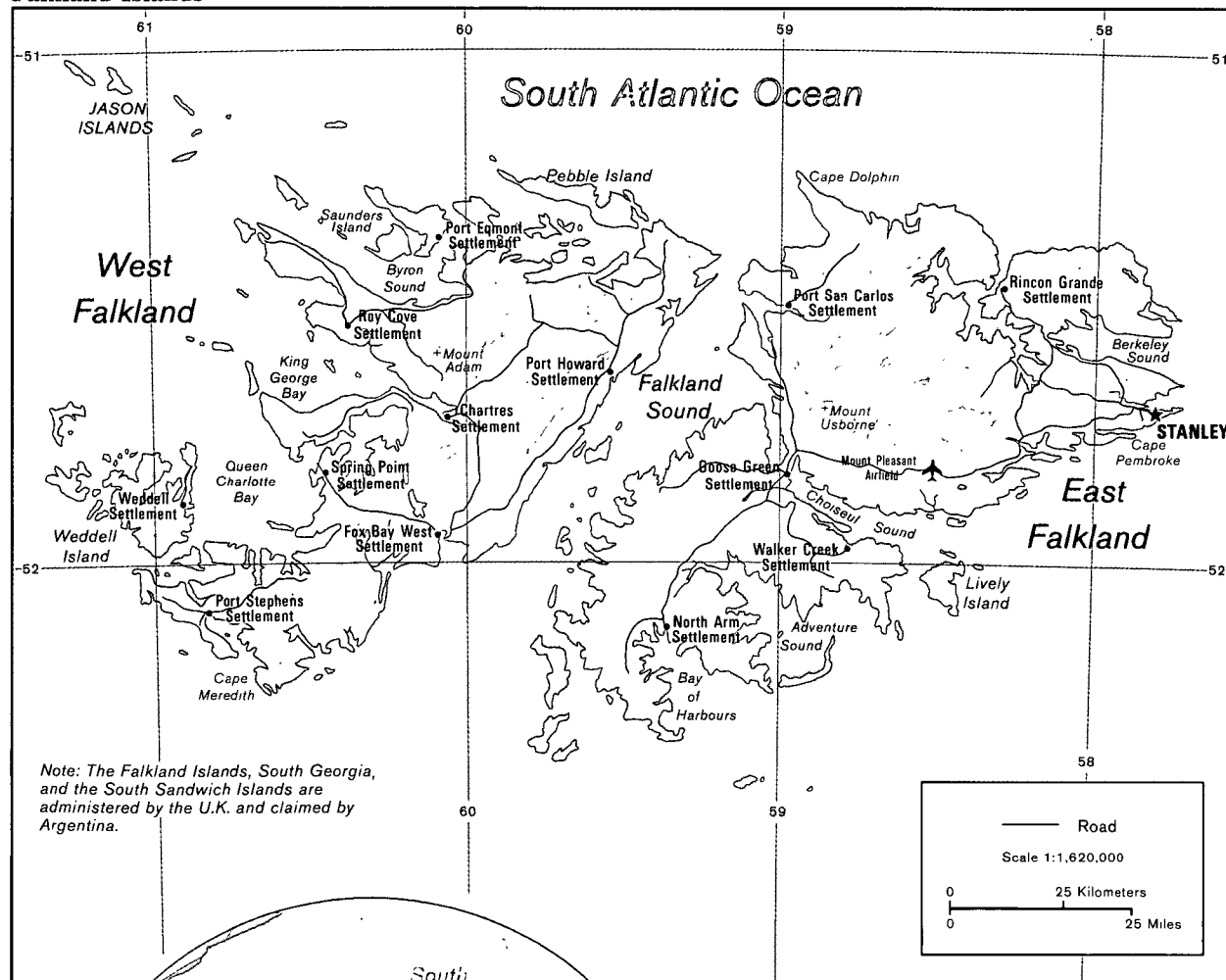


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Falkland Islands



Argentine and British Place Names

Islas Malvinas	Falkland Islands
Bahia de los Abrigos	Bay of Harbours
Bahia de la Anunciacion	Berkeley Sound
Bahia del Laberinto	Adventure Sound
Bahia San Julian	Queen Charlotte Bay
Cabo Belgrano	Cape Meredith
Cabo Leal	Cape Dolphin
Cabo San Felipe	Cape Pembroke
Isla Bougainville	Lively Island
Isla de Borbon	Pebble Island
Isla Gran Malvina	West Falkland
Isla San Jose	Weddell Island
Isla San Pedro	South Georgia
Islas Sebaldes	Jason Islands
Isla Soledad	East Falkland
Isla Trinidad	Saunders Island
Monte Alberdi	Mount Usborne
Monte Independencia	Mount Adam
Puerto Rivero	Stanley
Rocas Clerke	Clerke Rocks
Rocas Cormoran y Negra	Shag Rocks

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Falkland Islands and Dependencies**Border Basics**

The Falkland Islands (called Islas Malvinas in Argentina) is a British Crown Colony consisting of two main islands—East and West Falkland—and some 200 smaller islands and islets in adjacent waters totaling about 12,200 square kilometers. Administrative dependencies include South Georgia (375 square kilometers), situated some 1,285 kilometers east-southeast of the Falklands, and the South Sandwich Islands (330 square kilometers), located an additional 750 kilometers southeast of South Georgia. The capital, Stanley, is but 660 kilometers from the Argentine coast, but nearly 12,000 kilometers from London. []

The Falklands' terrain consists mostly of rugged, windswept hills with elevations up to 700 meters above sea level. The southern half of East Falkland, however, is a rolling plain with elevations less than 30 meters. Deep, fiord-like inlets along the coasts afford numerous good anchorages. The islands are covered with thin soils and rocks. Vegetation is limited to grass and low scrub underlain by thick layers of peat. The grass furnishes forage for several hundred thousand sheep whose wool provides the major export item of the islands. The isolated dependencies of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands are covered with snow and ice throughout the year; in summer, the snowline retreats to heights of about 300 to 400 meters on mountainous South Georgia, where the highest elevation is nearly 3,000 meters. On the volcanic South Sandwich Islands, only a few sheltered areas are free of ice and snow. []

Before the 1982 war between Argentina and the United Kingdom, the population of the Falklands—almost entirely of British descent—was about 1,800 and had been slowly declining. South Georgia's population also declined after the demise of whaling in the early 1960s to only about two dozen scientists prior to the 1982 conflict. (The South Sandwich Islands are uninhabited.) []

Significant Developments

The 1982 war ended the limited progress achieved during several years of bilateral talks (1977-81) that had led to public British statements indicating a willingness to consider a solution involving Argentine sovereignty. London's intention to work toward some form of political transfer was undermined by a persistent refusal of the islanders to entertain a political change in their status. The British military presence thwarted a military resolution. Attempts since 1983 to negotiate have foundered on the rigidity of the positions taken by each side. []

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Frontier History

The initial European discoverer of the islands is uncertain. Spanish-language sources cite maps dated as early as 1522 depicting the location of the islands and suggesting Spanish sightings early in the 16th century. However, English-language sources credit a British Captain Davis with discovering the islands in 1592. There is agreement that almost a century later (1690), a Captain John Strong landed and named the narrow sound separating the islands after Viscount Falkland, from whom the English name is derived. During the 18th and 19th centuries, a series of settlements were established and ownership disputes arose, as follows:

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- Louis de Bougainville, a Frenchman, established Fort St. Louis in 1764, claiming the island for Louis XV and naming them Les Malovines.
- Two years later, Charles III of Spain claimed the islands, and, following European negotiations, Spain paid Bougainville for the islands and took formal possession in 1767, naming them "Las Malvinas," a Hispanicized version of the French name.
- Earlier (1765-66), the British established a settlement on West Falkland (the French/Spanish settlement is on East Falkland); neither group was aware of—or ignored—the other's presence.
- Spain dislodged the British (1770) from their settlement on West Falkland, and, after face-saving negotiations (the British returned briefly), Britain withdrew in 1774.

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- Spanish colony continued until 1811 when it was disbanded because of expense.
- In 1820 representatives of Argentina (now independent from Spain) claimed the islands, notifying sealers and whalers using various harbors of their action.
- Following a series of incidents between American sealers and the governor of the islands, US warships took punitive action leaving the islands defenseless.
- British warships returned to former fort on West Falklands in 1833, hoisted British flag, and expelled remaining Argentine personnel from island.

The Argentine Government intermittently protested this reassertion of British control over the Falklands, but sometimes there were intervals of two or three decades between protests. In the 1880s Argentina tried without success to interest the United States in backing its claim on the grounds that the Monroe Doctrine had been violated. In the early 1930s national claims to "*nuestras Malvinas*" became an increasingly popular political issue, intensifying after World War II when the Peron government was established (1947). Additional arguments used to back Argentine claims included linking ownership of the Falklands with Antarctica claims and assertions that the Falklands were an extension of Argentina's continental shelf. Over time, Argentina's protests became part of the general anticolonial sentiments espoused in the United Nations and elsewhere, and, in 1966, Anglo-Argentine talks began over the Falklands after a UN General Assembly Resolution invited Great Britain and Argentina to engage in a "peaceful resolution" of the issue.

Initial talks held during the late 1960s and early 1970s concerned communications, transportation, and other nonpolitical matters. The return of Juan Peron, however, reignited the sovereignty issue, and tensions heightened during the mid-1970s. After several UN resolutions, the two sides entered negotiations in 1977 that continued through 1981. Although progress was made in exploring various political alternatives, a new Argentine Government that took power in late 1981 decided—and with no substantial British military

force present—to invade the Falklands (2 April 1982). Following a brief but costly war, Britain regained control of the Falklands in June 1982.

Current Developments and Outlook

Attempts since 1983 to reopen discussions between London and Buenos Aires to ease tensions and improve relations have stalled. Britain is adamant that the talks should focus on economic issues and the reestablishment of communication and transport links between the Falklands and Argentina before ownership questions are raised. Argentina, however, insists that discussions begin over the question of sovereignty. These uncompromising attitudes torpedoed talks that were to have been held in Berne, Switzerland, in mid-1984. Since then, there have been diplomatic probings but no commitment or any agreement as to an agenda for future meetings. Additionally, there have been public airings of the problem at annual meetings of the United Nations General Assembly.

Improvement in relations and resolution of the sovereignty issue appear to be only long-term possibilities rather than near-term probabilities. Argentina has little room for maneuver, given the reality of domestic politics and the injury to national pride suffered in their defeat by the British. More flexibility is available to Britain as suggested by a Foreign Affairs committee report to the House of Commons in December 1984. It set forth the following points: an accommodation between Britain and Argentina is not only inevitable but desirable; the defense of the islands is an economic drain that should not continue indefinitely; the economic and political prospects of the Falklanders are tied to some extent with their large continental neighbor; and the "passage of time" may make a reopening of discussions of a political leaseback solution more palatable.

A major obstacle to resolution of the sovereignty question is the anti-Argentine attitude of most Falkland Islanders. They find union with Argentina undesirable and contrast Argentine social and political problems with their own peaceful way of life. The attitude of the Falkland Islanders has been stiffened by Britain's announced intention to support a self-determination article in a revised draft constitution for the Falkland Islands.

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Secret**Border Treaties and Key Dates****1592**

British Captain, John Davis, reaches Falklands, but Spanish sources cite maps and sightings dating to early 16th century.

1690

British Captain, John Strong, lands on islands, names sound between the two main islands "Fawkland" which name becomes associated with entire group.

1764

Louis de Bougainville, a Frenchman, establishes settlement (St. Louis) on East Falkland and calls the islands Les Malovines.

1765-67

British settlement of Port Egmont, West Falkland, is founded. After negotiations, Bougainville is paid for his rights, and Spain, which terms island "Las Malvinas," raises flag on East Falkland.

1770

Spanish force British surrender of Port Egmont.

1771

Following discussions and reciprocal declarations by Spain and Britain, British reoccupy Port Egmont but secretly agree to evacuate after domestic political opposition is quieted.

1774

Britain evacuates garrison on West Falkland but leaves plaque declaring British sovereignty.

1811

Spain removes settlers from Soledad, on East Falkland, as an economy measure.

1820

Argentina, now free of Spanish rule, claims islands.

1826-31

Concessions given to Louis Vernet, a Frenchman, for exploitation of resources and upholding law leads to seizure of American ships engaged in sealing and fishing.

1831

In aftermath of earlier seizure and publicity over incident, US warship largely destroys and plunders Vernet's settlement, dispersing settlers, and claiming rights of fishing and sealing in adjacent waters.

1833

British, with Argentine-sponsored settlement gone, reoccupies islands.

1833-51

Argentina periodically protests Britain's occupation of the islands. London encourages settlement, and by 1850 population reaches 800.

1966

Following many years of Argentina's protests and after UN Resolution calling on the two nations to resolve sovereignty issue, Anglo-Argentine talks commence. After several years, agreements are reached on communications, transportation, and various cultural exchanges.

1977-81

New round of negotiations takes place that focuses on Argentine claims; British soften position on sovereignty issue.

1982

Argentina occupies Falklands in April (British military presence absent), but after brief air, sea, and land engagements Britain regains islands in June.

1984-85

Attempts to reopen London-Buenos Aires talks fail over disagreement of the priority of items to discuss and obdurate stand of Falklands' inhabitants against change in political status quo.

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Guyana-Suriname

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Guyana-Suriname

The design of this report permits updating of border information. Changes and additions will be disseminated to holders of this Digest as necessary.

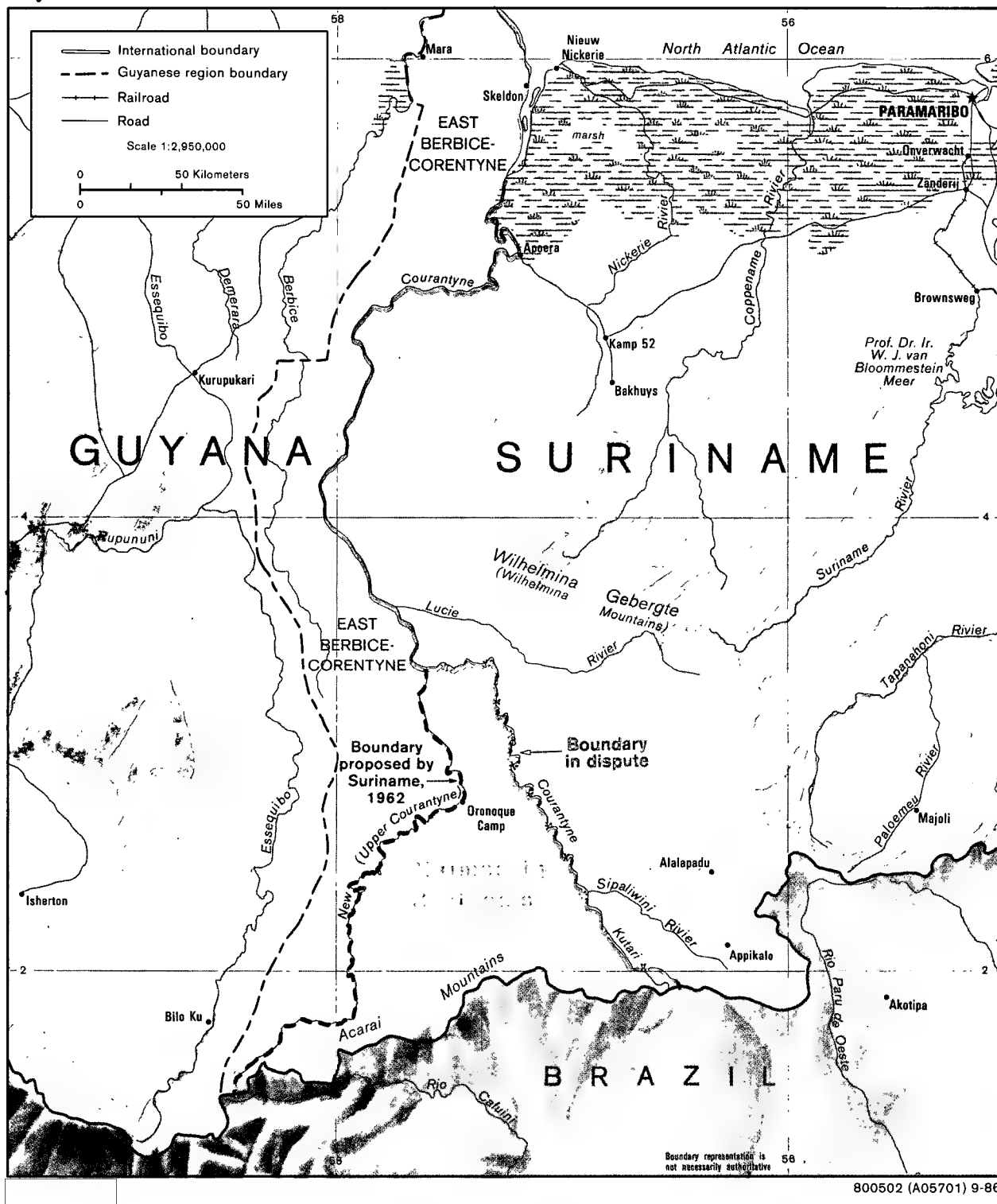


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Guyana-Suriname Border



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Guyana-Suriname**Border Basics**

The de facto Guyana-Suriname boundary follows the Courantyne River inland for about 600 kilometers from its mouth at the Atlantic Ocean to its headwaters at the triborder point with Brazil. The boundary lies along the left (west) bank of the Courantyne, although Guyana has navigational rights to the waterway. The southern third of the border, or about 225 kilometers, is in dispute over which of the two principal tributaries represents the main course of the river. []

Most of the border area consists of lowlands covered either by dense stands of tropical rain forest or by swamps. Exceptions occur along the coast and for a short distance upstream, mostly on the Guyana side of the river, where there are rice and sugarcane plantations. In the higher uplands, scrub or savanna may replace the tropical forests. In the interior, elevations increase gradually to about 200 meters, and a few isolated hills reach 300- to 400-meter heights. []

With minor exceptions, the border area is unpopulated. A few agricultural settlements are found near the mouth of the Courantyne, and for some 100 kilometers upstream there are widely scattered riverbank settlements of Amerindians. Aside from an occasional military post, the remainder of the border area is uninhabited. []

Other than a few logging trails, the Courantyne River is the main means of transport in the border area. The river is navigable by coastal ships for about 100 kilometers upstream from the coast until rapids and falls force portages and use of small river boats. []

Significant Developments

After Guyana gained its independence from Great Britain in May 1966, several incidents took place in the disputed territory, and there was an increase in polemics. In 1967 several Surinamese, reportedly workers tending a water metering station on the New

River, were evicted by Guyana. In 1969 a more serious incident erupted when Guyana Defense Force units forced Suriname troops from a post, including an airstrip, that had been established in disputed territory. The increased tension was followed by diplomatic efforts that terminated when the two Prime Ministers issued a joint communique in June 1970 calling for demilitarization of the disputed area and the establishment of a mixed commission to examine ways to promote economic and cultural cooperation. A subgroup was also established to resume discussions, broken off in 1966, on possible solutions. []

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Frontier History

The Guyanese-Surinamese border dispute originated near the end of Dutch rule over the entire region when the metropolitan Government of Amsterdam ruled that the territory of Berbice (now East Berbice-Corentyne, the easternmost region in Guyana) extended to the west bank of the Courantyne River and its presumed headwaters stream, the Kutari. The governors of the two areas confirmed this arrangement in 1799. At this time, however, Britain seized many of the Dutch settlements, and in 1814 the Dutch ceded what is now the territory of Guyana to Britain, who named it British Guiana. In 1831 the two colonial powers agreed that the Courantyne formed the border. Since most of the territory was unexplored and unmapped, London commissioned Robert Schomburgk, a Prussian geographer-naturalist, to survey and map Guyana's borders. Schomburgk's survey (1839-42) included mapping the Courantyne and its headwaters, which was assumed to be the border, and his cartographic results were used on maps published by both Britain and the Netherlands during the remainder of the 19th century. Another explorer, the British geologist Bannington Brown, discovered a major left-bank tributary in 1871, named the New River, that carried more water and was of greater length than the Courantyne-Kutari. []

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Dutch claims to the land west of the Kutari—based on the assumption that the true source of the Courantyne was the New River—were not made until negotiations were under way (1898-99) between Great Britain and Venezuela over the western boundary of

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Guyana. British reaction to the Dutch claim, which has formed the basis for subsequent arguments by Guyana, was that the Courantyne-Kutari had long been recognized as the border and that subsequent geographical discoveries did not change or invalidate earlier arrangements. []

The boundary controversy remained quiet for some decades, partly because a Dutch geographer in the 1920s claimed that the New River basin was significantly smaller than that of the Kutari—thus creating doubt as to the relative significance of various physical criteria used in determining river sources. During the period 1929-30, the Netherlands offered to settle the boundary dispute on the basis of the Courantyne-Kutari alignment if Britain would agree that the boundary would follow the western bank of the river. London agreed and negotiations led to a draft boundary treaty (1939) that was never signed because of the outbreak of World War II. Earlier a treaty had been signed (1936), establishing the tripoint of the Guyana-Suriname-Brazil boundary in accordance with the Netherlands' suggestion that the boundary line should be drawn from the source of the Kutari until it intersected with the Brazilian watershed. The definitive map of the trijunction was signed by the Netherlands, Great Britain, and Brazil. []

The Netherlands' position on the boundary changed after World War II. In 1962 the Dutch discarded the Courantyne-Kutari alignment in favor of the New River as the boundary and proposed that a midline river boundary be adopted. The Dutch also unilaterally renamed the New River the "Upper Courantyne." Britain rejected these Dutch proposals. Prior to Guyana gaining its independence (May 1966), the Suriname Government notified the British Government to place on record that the boundary between Guyana and Suriname was in dispute. []

Current Developments and Outlook

The border dispute has been dormant in recent years, and neither country appears anxious to publicize its territorial differences nor to take steps to resolve the issue. Suriname, upon gaining full independence in 1975, has maintained the claim. Guyana's refusal (1981) to sign a nonobjection pact to Suriname's proposed Kabalebo hydroelectric project—subsequently scrapped—that would have taken water from

the border river has worsened relations. Since 1980, Suriname's chaotic political situation and its deteriorating economy have preoccupied the changing leadership. []

Although modest momentum to resolve the dispute had come from the 1970 communique issued by the Prime Ministers of Guyana and Suriname, a subgroup charged with the exploration of border issues reportedly made no progress. Recent border incidents have been minor, compared with those of the late 1970s and early 1980s, when Suriname seized Guyanese fishing boats and lumber workers who ventured to use the Courantyne River and when Guyanese reportedly fired on Surinamese police posts. If Guyana and Suriname agree to submit the dispute to arbitration, factors favorable to Guyana would be the long acceptance by Suriname of the Courantyne-Kutari as the boundary, an earlier willingness by the Dutch to formally settle the dispute on this basis, and at least token occupation of the disputed area by Guyana. []

Border Treaties and Key Dates

1814-15

Convention of London is signed, confirmed at Paris (1815), Suriname is returned to Netherlands (after brief interlude of British rule), but Dutch territory in neighboring Guiana (Guyana) is ceded to Great Britain.

1831

Britain and the Netherlands by common consent agree that Courantyne River forms the border.

1839-42

Britain commissions Robert Schomburgk to survey and map Guyana; Schomburgk reports Kutari main upper tributary of Courantyne.

1871

British geologist, Bannington Brown, discovers New River—a tributary that contains more water and is of greater length than the upper Courantyne-Kutari.

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1899

During time of arbitral tribunal investigating Venezuela-Guyana boundary, Netherlands raises issue of New River as proper boundary, a proposal rejected by Great Britain.

1929-30

Netherlands Government offers to settle boundary on basis of "left bank of Courantyne-Kutari up to its source."

1936

Treaty is signed by Great Britain, Netherlands, and Brazil establishing boundary tripoint located in respect to source of Kutari.

1939

Draft treaty along lines of earlier Dutch proposal is readied but never signed because of outbreak of World War II.

1966

Netherlands, acting in behalf of Suriname, reopens border question and issues statement. prior to Guyana gaining its independence, that border is in dispute.

1970

Joint communique is issued by Prime Ministers of Guyana and Suriname, following several incidents in disputed New River area, calling for demilitarization of area and forming joint commission to work toward cooperative programs.

1971-84

Periodic but generally minor incidents occur, principally involving use of Courantye River; boundary status quo remains.

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Venezuela-Guyana

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Venezuela-Guyana

The design of this report permits updating of border information. Changes and additions will be disseminated to holders of this Digest as necessary.



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This map illustrates the international boundaries of Guyana, Venezuela, and Suriname. It highlights the 'Original Schomburgk Line, 1841' and the 'Arbitration award (Paris Award of 1899) [current boundary]'. The map also shows the 'British extension of Schomburgk Line, 1886'. Major cities and towns are labeled, including Georgetown, Lethem, and Paramaribo. The map includes a legend for international boundaries, railroads, and roads, along with a scale bar (1:4,500,000) and a north arrow. Key features include the Rio Orinoco, Rio Essequibo, and the North Atlantic Ocean.

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Venezuela-Guyana

Border Basics

The Venezuela-Guyana border with an estimated length of 743 kilometers extends from Punta Playa on the Atlantic coast inland to the tripoint with the Brazilian boundary. From Punta Playa, the boundary is a straight line extending southeasterly for about 35 kilometers until it intersects the Barima River. From that point, the boundary is predominantly aligned in the midchannels of several rivers—the Mururuma, Amakura, Cuyuni, and Wenamu—or uses local water divides. The last 107 kilometers is a straight line cutting across mountainous terrain before terminating at Mt. Roraima, at an elevation of about 2,800 meters. This section of the border closely corresponds to the water divide separating tributaries of the Essequibo in Guyana and the Orinoco in Venezuela.

The Paris Arbitration Tribunal Award defined the boundary by geographical description in 1899. A mixed British-Venezuelan boundary commission (1900-05) marked the boundary on the ground. Twenty-five irregularly spaced points were located, identified by geographical coordinates at river mouths, river confluences, headwaters location, and by other mainly physical features. Each location is marked by a concrete post. Only the initial section from Punta Playa to the Barima River was cleared and marked as visible on the ground. In 1932 an exchange of notes resulted in minor adjustments in the location of the tripoint of the Venezuela-Brazil-Guyana border.

The border area is almost uninhabited. A combination of dense tropical forests and rough mountainous terrain limits population, agriculture, and transportation routes. There is a little cultivation around Mabaram, in Guyana, near the coast, but otherwise only lumbering or minerals extraction brings settlers to the border area. Rivers are the only practical means of transborder movement; both the Amakura and Cuyuni are navigable border rivers.

Significant Developments

The 12-year moratorium provided for by the 1970 Protocol of Port-of-Spain, a time when the two sides were to refrain from statements and actions detrimental to each other, ended in June 1982. Although there were provisions for renewal of the moratorium, Venezuela refused, and the two countries entered a three-month period during which they were to attempt to agree on a means of settling their territorial dispute. This failed: Guyana rejected Venezuela's proposal for bilateral negotiations, and Venezuela rejected Guyana's plan for a judicial settlement by the International Court of Justice. The next stage provided for in the Geneva Agreement of 1966 was the referral of the dispute to an international organization or the United Nations Secretary General to determine the means of peaceful settlement—mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial, or other—to be used. Guyana accepted (March 1983) Venezuela's suggestion that the UN Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar, be the mediator. Accordingly, the Secretary General designated Diego Cordovez, the UN Assistant Secretary General for Special Political Affairs, as his special envoy to confer with representatives from each country before reaching a decision.

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Frontier History

The Venezuelan-Guyanese² boundary dispute revolves around the ambiguities of ancient treaties, the uncertainties of historical events and their interpretation, and the legal weight to after-the-fact disclosures pointing toward judicial compromise.

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The Spanish explorer Ojeda claimed the land at the mouth of the Orinoco in 1499, but it was Dutch traders who established trading posts (1626) in the area between the Orinoco and the Essequibo Rivers. It was not until the end of the Thirty Years War (1648), however, that Spain, which had been awarded most of South America by Papal Decree in 1493, recognized Dutch possessions in the New World—though the Treaty of Munster did not specify either what or where those possessions were.

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² Before 1970 the spelling was Guiana.

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During the latter half of the 17th century, Dutch traders established additional posts well inland on the upper Cuyuni and on other rivers. Considerably later (1724), Spanish missionaries founded settlements in the Guyanese interior, though all were destroyed in 1750 by an Indian uprising. In 1796 the British seized all Dutch settlements, and, in 1814, following a brief reassertion of Dutch control, the entire area—though not precisely defined in the treaty—was ceded to Great Britain by terms of the Treaty of London. []

Upon gaining independence from Spain, Venezuela (part of the state of Gran Colombia from 1821-30) informed Great Britain on several occasions that the boundary with British Guyana followed the course of the Essequibo River—diplomatic assertions that London neither accepted nor rejected. Because Guyana was mostly unexplored and unmapped, a Prussian geographer-naturalist, Robert Schomburgk, was employed (1839-41) by the British to explore, map, and recommend “convenient boundaries.” Schomburgk’s recommended boundary was approximately 150 to 200 kilometers west of the Essequibo, a territorial division promptly protested by Venezuela. Subsequent attempts in the 1840s to negotiate a boundary solution with Great Britain failed. Paradoxically, both countries would have apparently agreed to a compromise boundary—the Moruka River some 100 kilometers northwest of the Essequibo—had negotiations continued. []

The discovery of gold in the Guyanese interior in the latter half of the 19th century led to a reopening of the border dispute. Britain, because of the gold discoveries, enlarged its claims while Venezuela continued to press for the Essequibo boundary. Although Venezuela enlisted support from the United States, it was only when the Venezuelans hired William Schrupp, an effective lobbyist and former US Consul to Caracas who skillfully tapped anti-British sentiments in Washington, that greater pressures were placed on London to settle the dispute. An arbitration agreement between Venezuela and Great Britain was signed in February 1897 authorizing an arbitration panel consisting of two Venezuelans, two Americans

(both US Supreme Court Justices), and a Russian chairman, Frederick de Martens. The arbitral panel’s decision, the Paris Award of 1899, defined a boundary allocating to Britain more than 80 percent of what London had claimed. Because Venezuela received the mouth of the Orinoco River, the commission’s award was reluctantly accepted by Caracas. A mixed commission worked for five years (1900-05) to fix the boundary on the ground. []

Venezuela reopened the border issue in 1962 when it declared the 1899 agreement null and void. Venezuela’s action was taken after Britain had announced that Guyana would be granted independence. Earlier (1949) there had been sensationalized revelations by one of the US counsels, Severo Mallet-Prevost, who had represented Venezuela at the 1899 meeting, that a deal had been struck between the Russians and the British to agree to a compromise favoring Great Britain. There was considerable publicity in both countries over the changes made in Mallet-Prevost’s memorandum. In 1966 Britain, Venezuela, and Guyana met at Geneva and agreed to establish a mixed Guyanese-Venezuelan commission to seek “a practical settlement.” Since the commission failed to agree by February 1970, a preset date established by the commission, and because border incidents had increased tensions, the two countries signed the Protocol of Port-of-Spain (June 1970), which essentially froze boundary discussions for 12 years. []

Current Developments and Outlook

The UN Special Envoy, Diego Cordovez, has visited Guyana and Venezuela twice (August 1984 and March 1985) to explore each nation’s position before recommending means to settle the dispute. Both sides, however, still appear far apart in their views as to what constitutes acceptable compromises. []

For Venezuela, the dispute is less a matter of regaining territory than a means for redressing perceived injustices and restoring national honor. To bolster its

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case, Venezuela has assembled ancient maps and documents to support its contention that the Essequibo River was the traditional boundary. Great emphasis is placed on the "political" rather than the juridical nature of the 1899 boundary award, based on the revelations (1949) made by one of the participants, S. Mallet-Prevost, as to how the award may have been determined. (When the dispute resurfaced in the 1960s, however, the Office of the Legal Adviser, Department of State, believed on the evidence adduced at the time that an international tribunal would not support Venezuela's claim that the 1899 award is invalid.) Venezuelan pursuit of their *reclamacion de Guyana Esequiba* program—going so far as to indicate the area on their maps—also reflects the changed political relationships since 1950. Britain is no longer the world power of the 19th and early 20th century, whereas Venezuela has shed its weak and disorganized mantle and has achieved some regional importance. This newly developed sense of nationalism is a potent force sustaining Venezuelan objectives of some form of territorial readjustment. Additionally, potential offshore resources could be a factor if the land boundary is adjusted. []

The dispute is more critical to Guyana since 60 percent of its territory would be lost should the Essequibo River boundary prevail. This territory also contains much of Guyana's resources including bauxite, oil, and hydroelectric potential. Guyana believes it has a strong legal position and that world opinion would be favorable if the dispute were to be resolved by an international body. As Guyanese officials state, Venezuela accepted the 1899 award and signed the 1905 agreement, formally acknowledging the delimitation of the boundary on the ground. The timing of Venezuela's claim, coming soon after Britain announced its planned withdrawal from Guyana, would favor Guyana's role as a small state bullied by a larger, more powerful country. Guyana might, however, make minor territorial adjustments in exchange for assistance in developing resources in the disputed territory. []

Border Treaties and Key Dates

1499

Spanish explorer Ojeda lands near mouth of Orinoco and claims area for Spain.

1613-26

Dutch traders establish coastal settlements on Essequibo River.

1648

Treaty of Munster ending Thirty Years War confirms Dutch and Spanish territorial rights in the New World, but without specifying what or where they were.

1658-1700

Dutch settlements are established in Guyana interior.

1724-50

Spanish mission settlements are founded in Guyanese interior; then destroyed in 1750 Indian uprising.

1814

By terms of Treaty of London, Netherlands cedes Dutch settlements on coast and the Essequibo to Britain.

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1839-41

British commission survey and boundary recommendations to be conducted by Robert Schomburgk, to determine the extent of the Guyana territory.

1824-50

Britain and Venezuela conduct nonconclusive boundary negotiations, end with status quo declarations.

1863-75

Gold strikes in interior attract large numbers of British prospectors and adventurers.

1887-96

British-Venezuelan tension over border issue increases; Venezuela secures US assistance, and a rise

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in anti-British sentiment eventually forces Great Britain to enter agreement with Venezuela to form arbitration commission.

1899

Arbitration Tribunal announces award favoring British version of boundary; Venezuela reluctantly accepts.

1905

Border is delimited by mixed commission and its work ratified by Britain and Venezuela.

1949

Publication of S. Mallet-Prevost memorandum (written in 1949) suggesting pro-British bias and pressures in the 1899 arbitration commission.

1962

Venezuela declares 1899 award null and void.

1966

Britain, Venezuela, and Guyana sign Geneva agreement to set up mixed commission to resolve border issue, with various procedures to follow if agreement is not reached.

Guyana becomes independent over Venezuelan protests.

1970

Because of no border agreement, Protocol of Port-of-Spain is signed, providing for 12-year "cooling off procedures" freezing claims as of that time.

1982

Moratorium ends and Venezuela refuses to renew; no agreement on method for a solution.

1983

Venezuela and Guyana agree to permit UN Secretary General to recommend appropriate diplomatic mechanism to resolve dispute.

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**Other Latin American
Boundaries and Territorial Disputes**

The design of this report permits updating of border information. Changes and additions will be disseminated to holders of this Digest as necessary.



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**Other Latin American Boundaries
and Territorial Disputes**

Nearly all remaining Latin American international boundaries have been demarcated and major disputes resolved. Many of these boundaries, however, have a history of controversy, and some boundary disputes have only recently been resolved. Most disputes arose because of imperfect knowledge of the physical characteristics of the borderlands—commonly located in remote and largely uninhabited areas—and from map errors or unclear written descriptions of border features in treaties delimiting the boundary. Arbitration often has been used to resolve border disputes. Future boundary disputes are possible, particularly where boundary markers are widely spaced or where rivers form the boundary and the course of the river changes because of flooding.

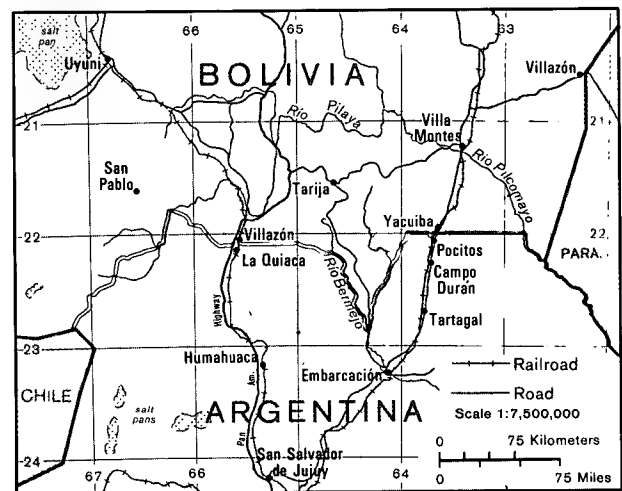
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The accompanying table lists boundary status (demarcated or delimited), pertinent boundary treaties and agreements, and, where available, the *International Boundary Studies* (IBS) prepared by the Office of the Geographer, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State.

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Boundary	Length (Kilometers)
Argentina-Bolivia	832
Status:	Demarcated (1894-1939)
Treaty:	Argentina-Bolivia Treaty (1889); modification agreements (1891, 1925, 1938, 1941)
IBS:	No. 162, November 1977



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Argentina-Brazil	1,224
Status:	Demarcated (1904)
Treaty:	Argentina-Brazil Treaty (1898); clarification treaty (1910) and complimentary treaty (1927)
IBS:	No. 168, May 1979



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Boundary	Length (Kilometers)
Argentina-Chile	5,150
Status:	Demarcated
Treaty:	Argentina-Brazil Treaty (1881) and numerous subsequent agreements fixing individual border sectors
IBS:	No. 101, May 1970 (covers only Palena sector of 72 kilometers)

Note: For information on Beagle Channel controversy and extreme southern section of the boundary, see page 5.

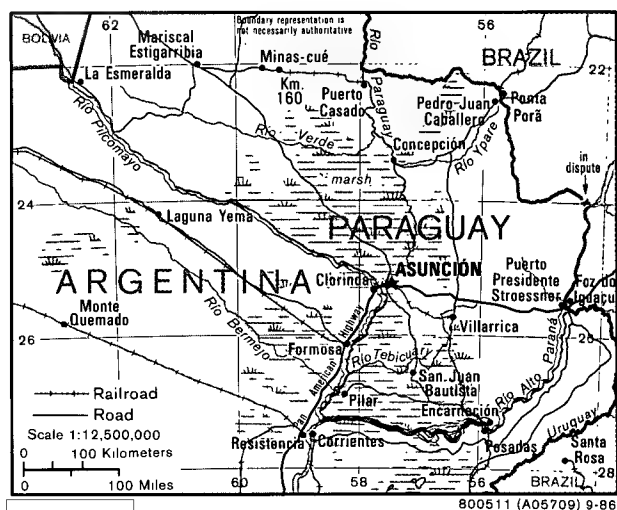


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Boundary	Length (Kilometers)
Argentina-Paraguay	1,880
Status:	Demarcated (1876-1945)
Treaty:	Argentina-Paraguay Treaty (1876); modification treaties (1939, 1945)
IBS:	No. 166, January 1979



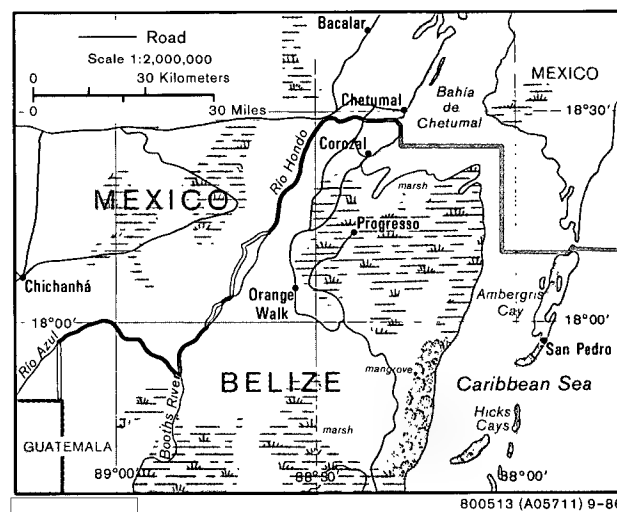
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Argentina-Uruguay	579
Status:	River boundary demarcated by series of points (1961, 1973)
Treaty:	Argentina-Uruguay Treaty (1961) and (1973); latter treaty defines border south of Punta Gorda
IBS:	No. 68 (Rev) October 1975



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Belize-Mexico	250
Status:	Delimited, using rivers and geographic coordinates
Treaty:	Great Britain-Mexico Treaty (1893)
IBS:	No. 161, February 1977



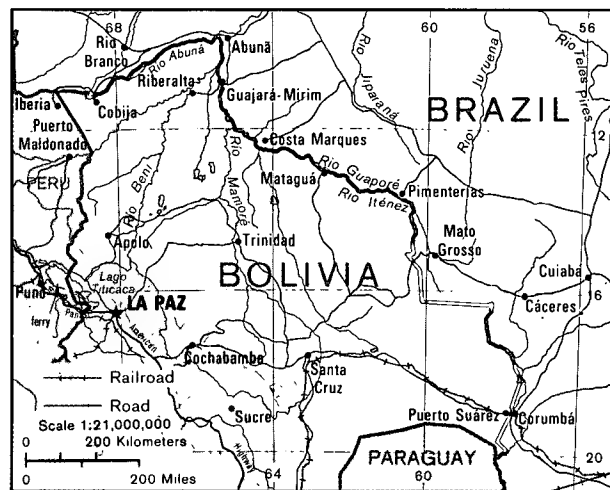
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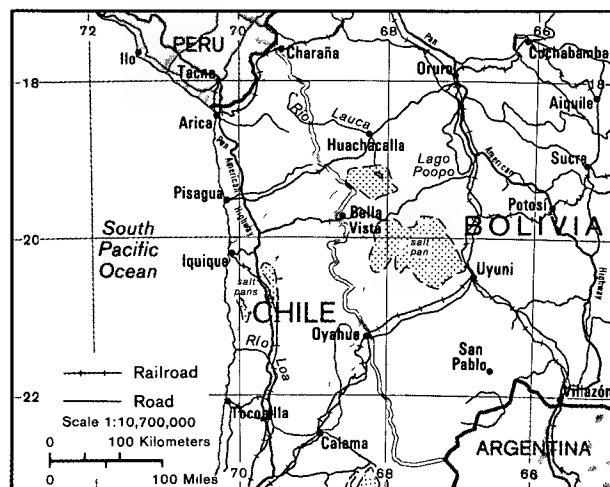
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Boundary	Length (Kilometers)
Bolivia-Brazil	3,400
Status:	Demarcated
Treaty:	Bolivia-Brazil Treaty (1903) and subsequent protocols and supplementary treaties through 1958 for individual border sectors
IBS:	None



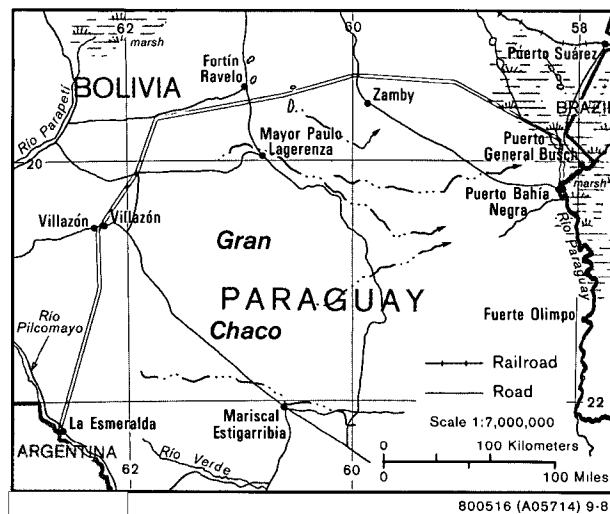
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Bolivia-Chile	861
Status:	Demarcated (1904-05); minor changes in 1907
Treaty:	Bolivia-Chile Treaty (1904)
IBS:	No. 67, March 1966



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Bolivia-Paraguay	750
Status:	Demarcated (1936); minor changes in 1969
Treaty:	Bolivia-Paraguay
IBS:	None



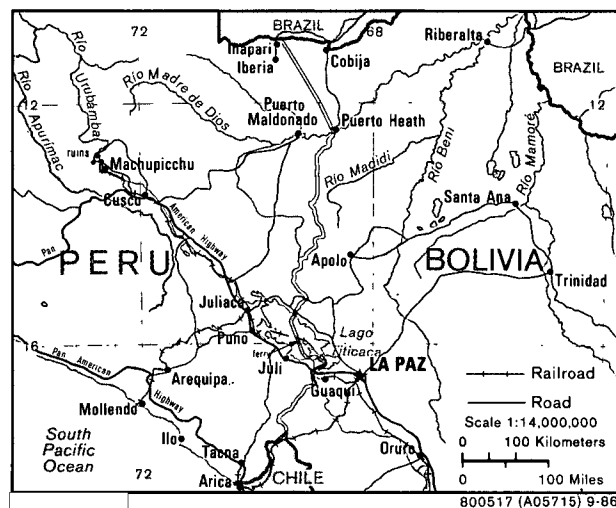
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Boundary	Length (Kilometers)
Bolivia-Peru	900
Status:	Demarcated (1937)
Treaty:	Bolivia-Peru (1909) and later agreements
IBS:	None



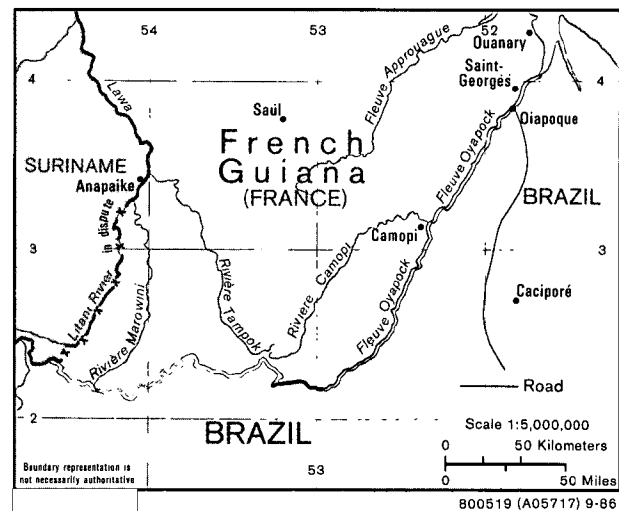
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Brazil-Colombia	1,643
Status:	Demarcated (1937)
Treaty:	Brazil-Colombia (1907)
IBS:	No. 174, April 1985



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Brazil-French Guiana	673
Status:	Demarcated (1959)
Treaty:	France-Portugal (1713); Arbitral Award (1900) and Letter of Agreement (1962-63)
IBS:	None



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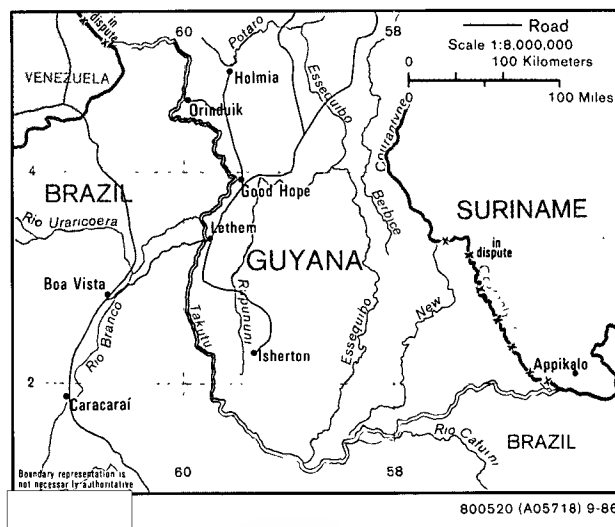
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Boundary	Length (Kilometers)
Brazil-Guyana	1,119
Status:	Demarcated (1938)
Treaty:	Brazil-British Guyana Treaty (1926); Exchange of Notes fixing boundary (1940)
IBS:	None



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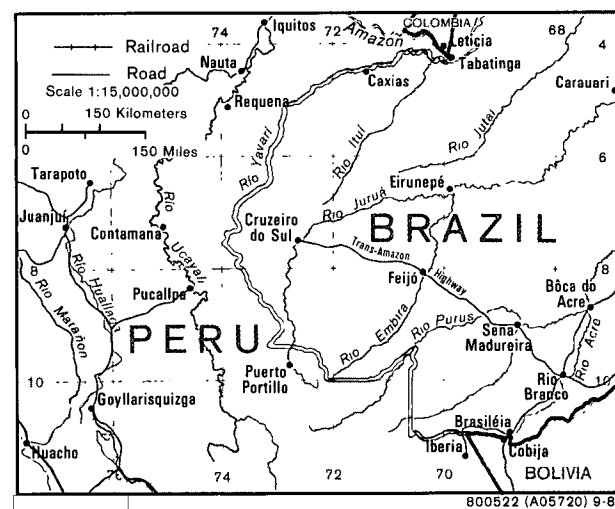
Brazil-Paraguay	1,290
Status:	Demarcated (1874)
Treaty:	Brazil-Paraguay Boundary Treaty (1872)
IBS:	None

Note: Dispute over Guaira Falls sector flared during mid-1960s.



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Brazil-Peru	1,560
Status:	Demarcated (1910-12); redemarcated (1981)
Treaty:	Brazil-Peru (1909)
IBS:	None



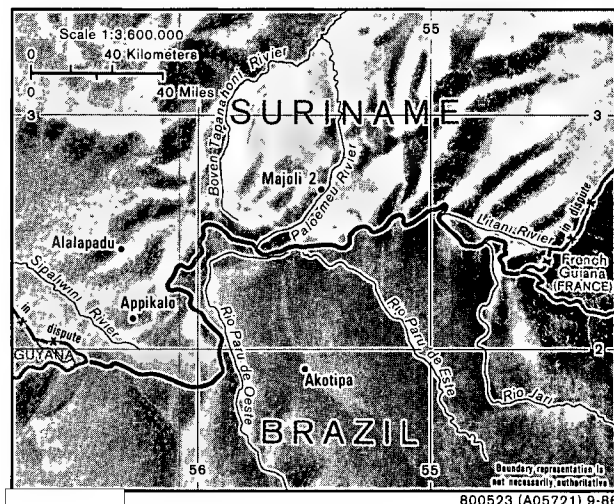
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Boundary	Length (Kilometers)
Brazil-Suriname	597
Status:	Demarcated (1938)
Treaty:	Brazil-Netherlands (1906)
IBS:	None



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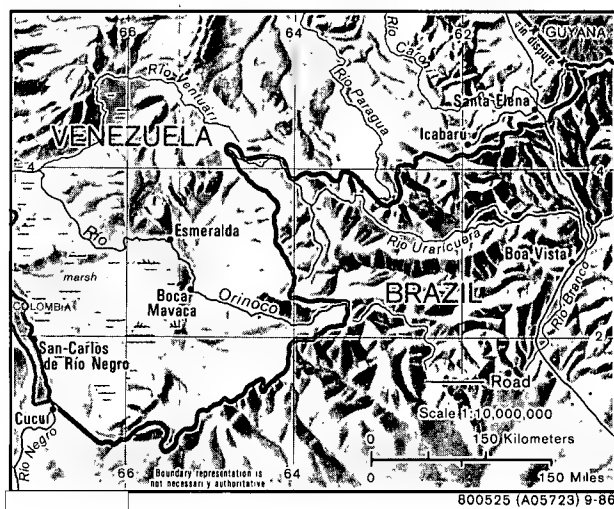
Brazil-Uruguay	985
Status:	Demarcated (1920-35)
Treaty:	Brazil-Uruguay Treaty (1851), adjustments and modifications (1852, 1909, 1913, 1933, 1972)
IBS:	No. 170, November 1979

Note: Low-key disputes exist concerning Brazilian islands at confluence of Uruguay and Rio Quarai, and over the Arroyo de la Invernada area; Uruguay has without success attempted to engage Brazil in talks to resolve problems.



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Brazil-Venezuela	2,200
Status:	Demarcated (1940-73)
Treaty:	Brazil-Venezuela (1859) and several subsequent agreements ratifying demarcation work through 1973
IBS:	No. 175, July 1985



25X1

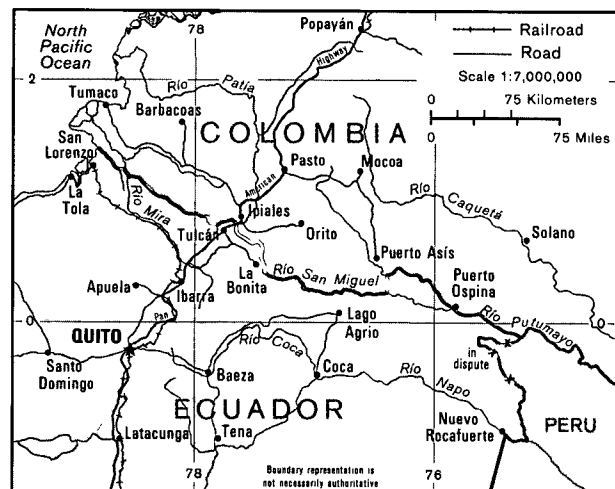
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75

Secret

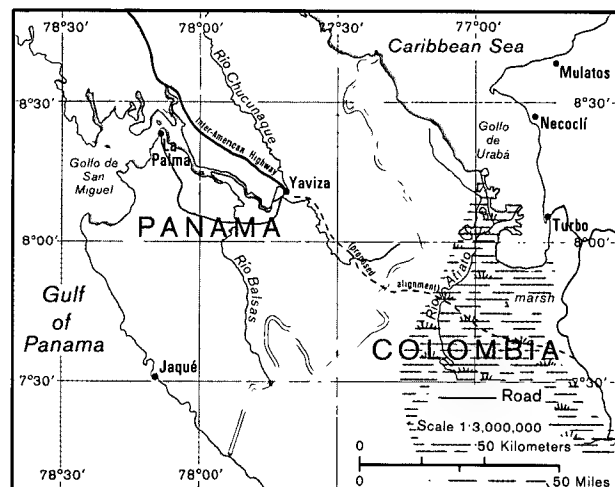
Secret

Boundary	Length (Kilometers)
Colombia-Ecuador	590
Status:	Demarcated (1919)
Treaty:	Colombia-Ecuador (1908 and 1916)
IBS:	None



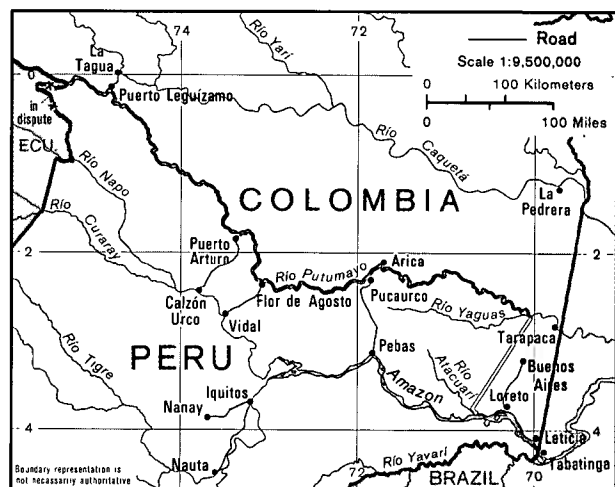
25X1

Colombia-Panama	225
Status:	Demarcated (1938)
Treaty:	Colombia-Panama Boundary Treaty (1924)
	Exchange of Notes (1938)
IBS:	No. 62, January 1966



25X1

Colombia-Peru	2,900
Status:	Demarcated (1930)
Treaty:	Colombia-Peru (1922)
IBS:	None



25X1

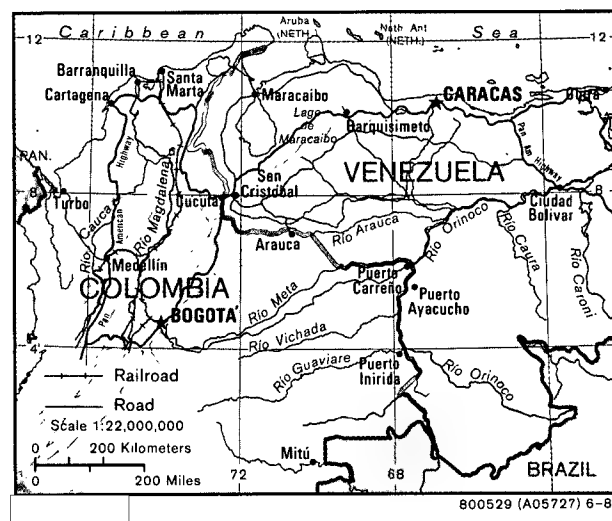
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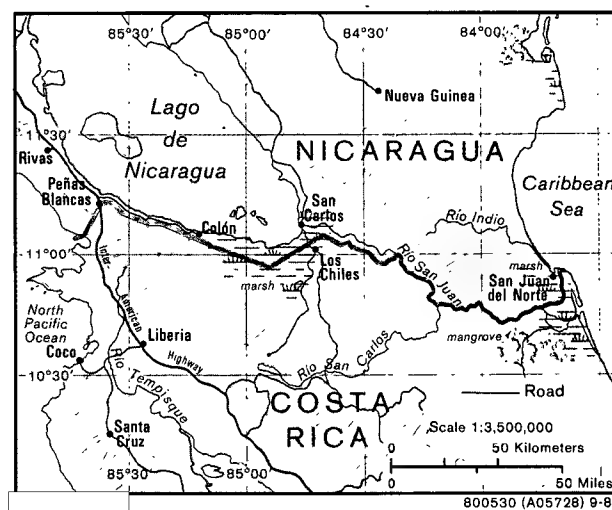
Secret

Boundary	Length (Kilometers)
Colombia-Venezuela	2,050
Status:	Demarcated (1932); redemarcated (1982-83)
Treaty:	Colombia-Venezuela (1891) and several subsequent awards and agreements
IBS:	None



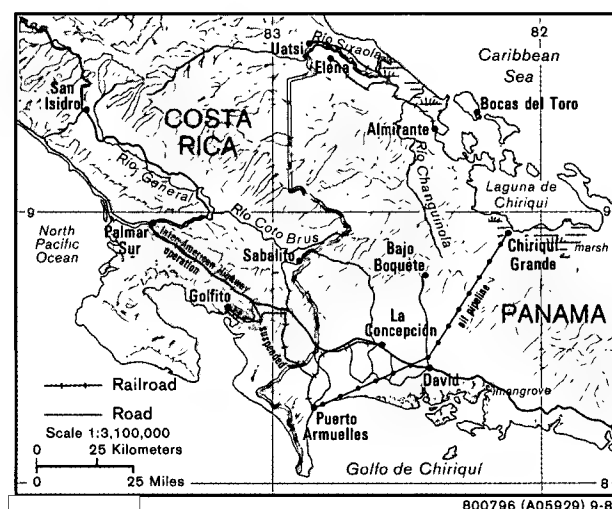
25X1

Costa Rica-Nicaragua	309
Status:	Demarcated (1900)
Treaty:	Costa Rica-Nicaragua Treaty (1858) and five arbitral awards (1897-1900) clarifying individual sections
IBS:	No. 158, August 1976



25X1

Costa Rica-Panama	330
Status:	Demarcated (1944)
Treaty:	Costa Rica-Panama Treaty (1941)
IBS:	No. 156, July 1976



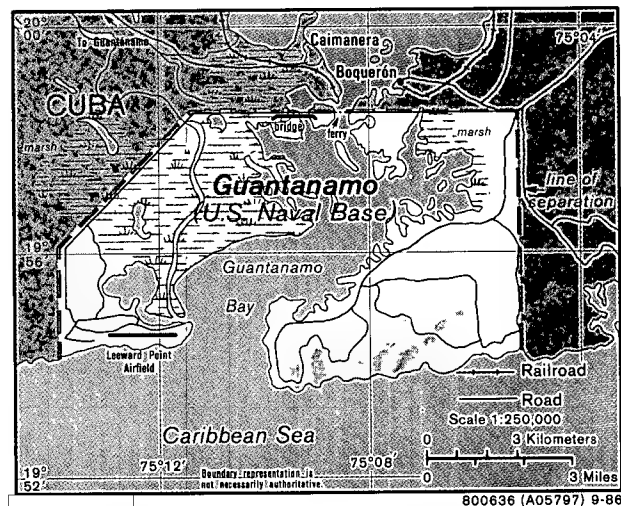
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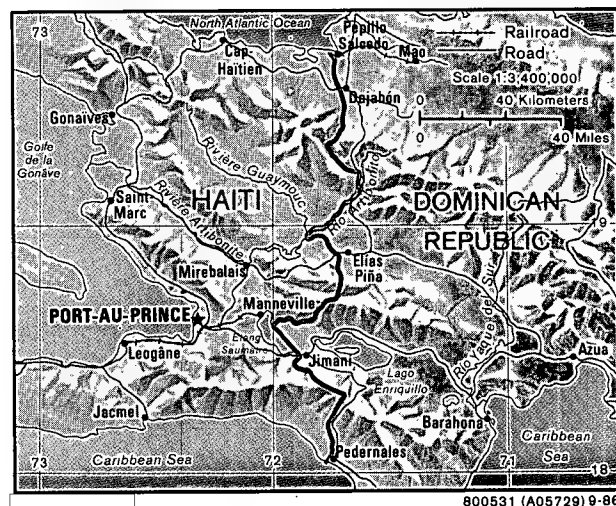
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Boundary	Length (Kilometers)
Cuba-United States (Guantanamo)	
Status:	US naval base on 116 square kilometer leased site flanking outer portion of Guantánamo Bay
Treaty:	Treaty (1934) reaffirmed in 1963; provides that only US abandonment of area or a mutual agreement can terminate the lease
IBS:	None



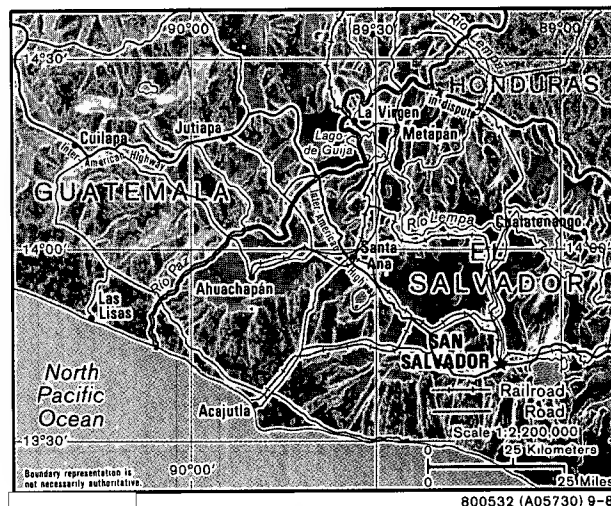
25X1

Dominican Republic-Haiti	275
Status:	Demarcated (1930 and 1935)
Treaty:	Dominican Republic-Haiti Treaty (1929); minor revisions (1935)
IBS:	No. 5, May 1961



25X1

El Salvador-Guatemala	203
Status:	Demarcated (1940)
Treaty:	El Salvador-Guatemala Treaty (1938)
IBS:	No. 82, July 1968



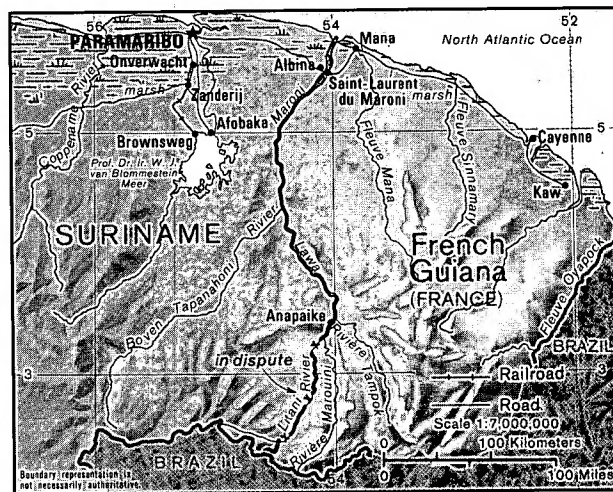
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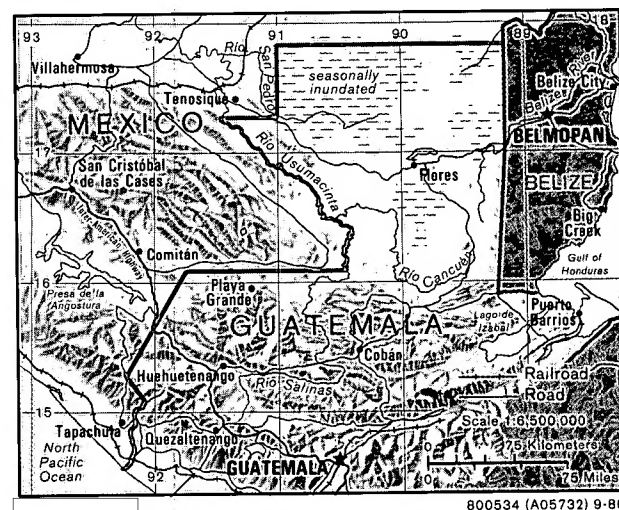
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Boundary	Length (Kilometers)
French Guiana-Suriname	510
Status:	Demarcated, except for southern section
Treaty:	Arbitral Award (1891); modification (1905, 1915)
IBS:	None
Note: Draft treaties to settle southernmost border section have been readied in 1939 and 1979 but not signed.	



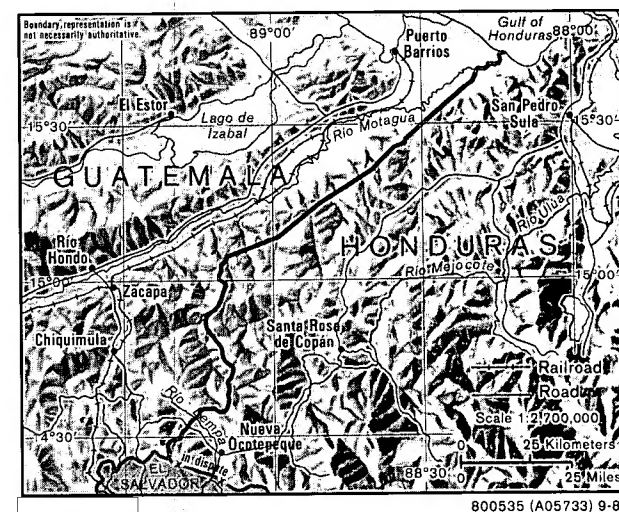
25X1

Guatemala-Mexico	962
Status:	Demarcated (1899)
Treaty:	Guatemala-Mexico Treaty (1882); modified by 1895 convention
IBS:	No. 159, December 1976



25X1

Guatemala-Honduras	256
Status:	Demarcated (1936)
Treaty:	Guatemala-Honduras Treaty of Arbitration (1930) and subsequent award (1933)
IBS:	No. 157, July 1976



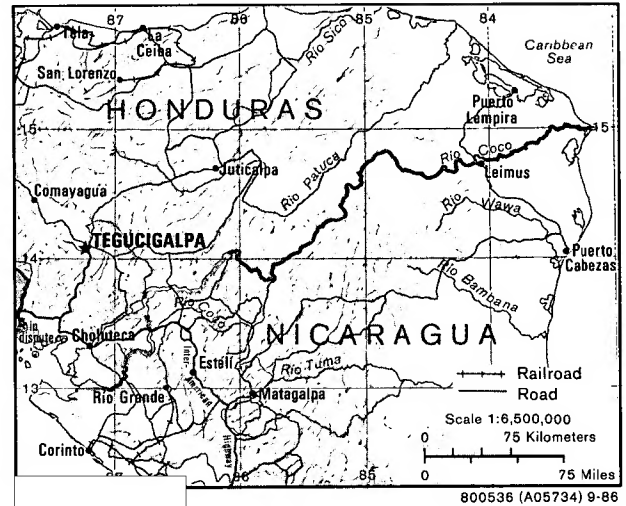
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Boundary	Length (Kilometers)
Honduras-Nicaragua	922
Status:	Demarcated (1963)
Treaty:	Honduras-Nicaragua Treaty (1894); Arbitral Award by King of Spain (1906) and International Court of Justice (1960) decision
IBS:	No. 36, October 1964



25X1

25X1

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